



Consumption of Cultural Values of Social Media

Burhanuddin Arafah*, Muhammad Hasyim

Hasanuddin University

*Corresponding author. Email: burhan-arafah@unhas.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Social media as a gateway to information provides a wide variety of media users with the ability to read a text message and understand the meaning of a social media. With the flow of information through social media lasting for 24 hours, media users can bring up the cultural consumption of information. The main problem in this context is the meaning of social media texts by media users. This paper explores the meanings of social media texts, which give birth to a cultural consumption of information. The problem that is posed is what kind of cultural consumption is found and how readers interpret text messages on social media. Data collection was conducted through the use of a questionnaire distributed online to social media users, and the approach used was media semiotics. This paper concludes that media users who have roles as readers, publishers, and producers of social media texts have a higher tendency to read information and ways to actualize themselves as active media users. The higher reading interest in various information leads to the use of different social media and has developed potential problems with the meaning of text messages between users. This study contributes to the importance of increased culture in digital media literacy by having a critical attitude towards various pieces of information.

Keywords: *Cultural consumption of the information, Meaning, Social media texts.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become a gateway for information. Based on data, approximately 100% of internet users use social media as a medium or means to access information (Arafah & Hasyim, 2022). The access to information is in the form of current issues. With the help of social media, internet users quickly find out what events are happening. The desire to seek information through social media is in line with the faster growth of internet users over the years. In 2020, the internet penetration in Indonesia will have reached over 196.7 million, or over 50% of the total population (<https://apjii.or.id/>). Interestingly, the most popular platform was social media, with 160 million users (Arafah & Hasyim, 2022). Along with this fact, mostly in this modern world, it is surrounded by a cacophony of many sensitive issues on social media and on TV shows (Purwaningsih, Arafah, & Abbas, 2020).

On the other hand, science and technology that develop in great advance cause social media to become inseparable from modern people without being limited to updating their daily activities (Suhadi, Arafah, Makatita, Abbas, & Arafah, 2022). Easy and quick access to information can cause problems of meaning. News articles on social media certainly present complex signs,

not only verbal signs (language) but also non-verbal signs, such as emojis, and news in the form of images and videos (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019). For example, emojis are tangible evidence of non-verbal signs and visual language that color communication on social media. Along with the increasing use of emojis, it has also developed characters and facial expressions that can describe users' emotional states and thoughts. This is one of the cyberculture issues that have entered the community culture (Taylor, Demont-Heinrich, Broadfoot, Dodge & Jian, 2004). The use of emojis associated with verbal language in communication on social media is distinct from cyberculture, creating a new culture that takes place on the internet (social media).

Reading and commenting on social media is a process of symbolic exchange (Merrin, 1999). The sender (user) delivers a message (chat) with complex signs (verbal and non-verbal), which is then received by another user as a communicant. Through the internalization process, the message is interpreted according to the knowledge and cultural background of the user as a means of communication and then sent back with a certain message. The text exchange between the sender and receiver contains certain meanings in detail to deliver what they want to express through text (Asriyanti, Arafah

& Abbas, 2022). Meanwhile, the symbolic exchange in a text message between the two parties can create multiple meanings or interpretations of the text. The multiple interpretations can show what the receiver gets is different from the values that the sender tries to give. The values in the text can describe how a person acts or communicates in daily life (Afiah, Arafah & Abbas, 2022). Furthermore, the meaning of a text will give complete information if both sender and receiver understand the context (Arafah et al., 2020). Therefore, social conflicts that can arise in using social media are due to the meaning of different signs being communicated. The social conflict that happened in a society can be identified by indicating the language used as it is the media to put their thoughts in communication (Fadillah, 2022; Mutmainnah & Pattu, 2022).

As the media of communication, language can be used for many different purposes, such as apologizing, complimenting, complaining, etc. (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). Complaining is one of the most common topics to see on social media nowadays where people failed to get their expectations and ended up criticizing in social media. Another thing that could be a problem is the dissemination of fake news (hoax), false information that aims to mislead and harm users. Hoaxes on social media can influence users' opinions and emotions. Fake news spreaders convey messages with the aim of convincing readers to believe the information conveyed or the activities they will do. This kind of situation will never result good if all people remain to believe in that fake news. If it does not stop, it will be repeated all again and turn into bad habitual actions (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022).

The environment becomes the nearest factor people do whether good or bad habits. The environmental characteristic is reflected in the language used as the people are built by how they act, behave, and the environment they grow (Siwi et al., 2022). The use of language in social life purposes to convey the context spoken where the speakers pay attention to the current condition since the environment takes a part in a language process of interaction (Takwa et al., 2022 & Anggrawan et al., 2019). Although the environment affects the character of a language, the concept of modernization can cause changes in the language itself, for example, the shift of lexicon that changes the way people understand the meaning of a language in one society (Takwa et al., 2022). Bringing the fact the young generation is already using social media, the role of parents and teachers is important. Teaching students in this modern world is quite challenging because each student brings different cultural consciousness (Sunardi et al., 2018). Furthermore, with effort and positive energy of one's self to achieve a good result, it will also result in high motivation to become better (Arafah et al., 2020).

This paper discusses the meaning of social media texts by the users, which will bring up the cultural consumption of social media texts using semiotic analysis (text that is seen as a sign). Data collection through the use of a questionnaire distributed online to social media users and news articles on social media.

A semiotic approach is an approach that is mostly used to study language in digital media. Exploring meaning through signs on social media texts will certainly be closely related to semiotics, with its primary focus on system signs. The production of digital media is referred to as a denotative level (informative) in semiotic perspectives. Text circulation (publication) is a process of exchanging symbolic signs between the text and the reader. Consumption (reading) of the text is a process of interpreting a text, producing denotations, connotations, and myths (Barthes, 1977). The semiotic analysis concerned with digital media texts focuses on how humans (internet users) produce, circulate (spread), and consume (interpret) digital media texts. According to Riffaterre (1978), the meaning of texts is carried out by the dialectical exchange between text and readers (internet users), namely the dialectical exchange between language level (denotation) and semiotic level (connotation).

Roland Barthes developed de Saussure's semiotics (1972), which divides meanings into two. The first order is called denotation, and the meaning created from the aspect of meaning is called connotation. The development of a form of language is called metalanguage. In the second order, Barthes also developed a semiotic model called myth. Barthes called it mythology. Denotation, as the first order of signification (primary system), is a meaning that is widely accepted in the basic conventions of society. Furthermore, connotation, as the second order of signification (secondary system), is a certain meaning (additional meaning) of the primary system. Connotations are new meanings given by sign users that are associated with ideology, and socio-culture, and are based on existing social conventions. Connotation is used to describe socio-cultural realities, which can become social labels entrenched in society.

The denotation is a sign that provides real benefits and is naturally used by sign users. For example, clothing is designed to protect the wearer's body; a car is a means of transportation. Denotation refers to the literal meaning (actual meaning) of a sign (item). The signifier is the first layer, is the property of the object itself, and it explains the meaning and value of the benefits or uses of the object. In the cultural context, particular clothes are used specifically for traditional culture, for example, the 'bodo' clothes worn by Bugis women at wedding ceremonies. The function of 'bodo' clothes, as they are, is called denotation. Likewise, in traditional culture, for

example, dances with specific functions (benefits), are performed in certain ceremonies.

Connotation is an order of signification that refers to additional or symbolic meanings attached to signs (objects). The reality of connotation no longer refers to useful or non-functional values but symbolic values or sign labels in culture. The connotation is an order of signification that interprets something other than itself (denotative meaning). Connotation marking is a process of forming cultural commodification. Cultural traditions such as dances and traditional clothes are no longer interpreted as the cultural wealth of a country but are interpreted in terms of symbolic connotations, namely the value of exchange; traditional culture is equivalent to the value of money as commodity goods. Connotation is a sign that is used for secondary meaning

2. METHOD

A descriptive approach was employed to describe the characteristics of phenomena in social media texts (Hasjim et al., 2020; Arafah et al., 2021; Yulianti et al., 2022). The semiotic approach was used to explain the layers of meaning of social media texts (Hasyim et al., 2021). Data collection used a questionnaire distributed online to respondents, observation of communication between social media users (WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook).

There were 300 respondents, and the characteristics of the respondents can be seen in Table 1.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Social Media and Linguistic Communication

Based on respondents' answers (500 people), 98 percent of respondents searched for information on social media. Respondents spent 3.14 hours per day accessing the information on social media. Instagram was the most popular platform, accounting for 38% of all users, followed by WhatsApp (20%), YouTube (18%), Twitter (8%), TikTok (6%), and Facebook (2%).

Internet users' activities are not only accessing information but also providing comments on various

news content (information), making news, and sharing news that is considered newsworthy and interesting. Communication activity on social media generates linguistic communication, namely the symbolic exchange (verbal and non-verbal signs). Saussure presents linguistic communication as a social event (1972), which can be observed in the speech acts (parole) on social media. Linguistic communication can take place in a way, namely, communication between individuals and communication among members of social media groups. Speech acts that often occur on social media are chats and text-based communication between internet users, both individually and in social media groups, which are carried out directly on social media. Chat is used to express senders' thoughts and feelings, and recipients' thoughts are conveyed through chats. Chat communication not only conveys verbal messages but also conveys non-verbal messages (emojis, voice messages, pictures, and videos). Communication complexity on social media caused to problems of meaning (interpretation) among social media users.

Linguistic communication through chats can take place between individuals and groups. Two social media users (Figure 1), person A, and person B are chatting. Linguistic communication can come from the brain (mind) A. In brain A, concepts (facts of consciousness that can be thoughts, feelings, and emotions) are associated with representations of linguistic signs (writing) used to express these concepts. A feels an intense desire to write a message (chat). The written message is sent through social media applications, such as Instagram, which is received visually and then enters B's brain. If B responds by responding to a written message from B, the second speech act takes place. The transmission process takes place, which starts in B's brain. What is in B's brain is represented through written linguistic signs and passed on to A. A read written messages (chat) and then sends them to B's brain. If the conversation continues between A and B, then the linguistic communication process starts from A again and then forwards to B. Linguistic communication can continue to occur between A and B during the conversation. Likewise, linguistic communication in

Table 1. Characteristics of respondents

Sex	Male		Female			
	65,6%		34.4%			
Age (Years)	12-20		21-59		> 60	
	32.2%		69,2%		0,7%	
Education Level	JHS	SHS	Bachelor Degree	Master Degree	Doctorate Degree	
	1,2%	58,2%	18,6%	15,4%	5,7%	
Occupation	Student	Civil Servant	Employee	Entrepreneur	Lecturer	Etc.
	68,8%	11,9%	5,5%	4,5%	4,5%	4,8%

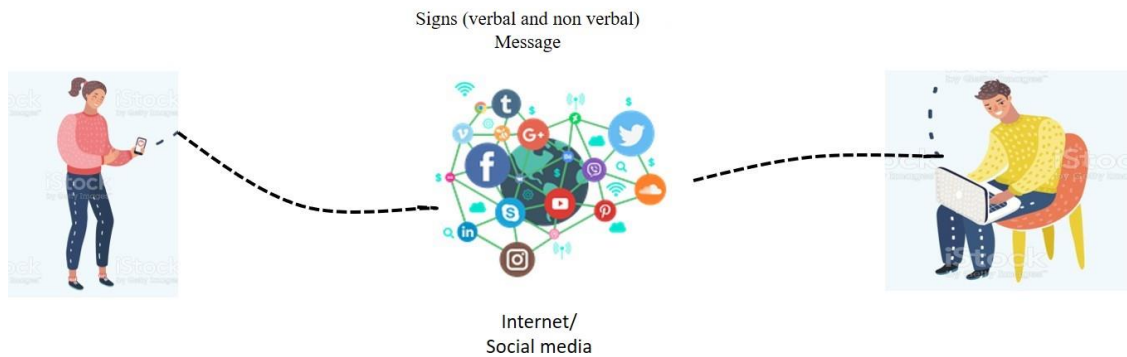


Figure 1 Speech acts (between individuals) on social media.

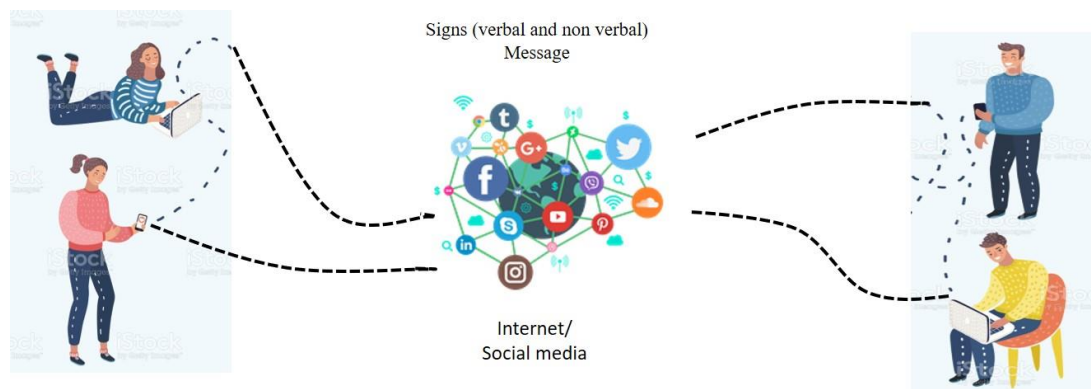


Figure 2 Speech acts (between members) on social media.

social media groups (Figure 2). A sends messages using signs and then forwards them to group members through an application. B, C, D, and other members who are online read the written message and then forward it to the brain. Then, one member, for example, C, does the same thing in the interpersonal communication cycle with A. The speech acts in social media groups can take place simultaneously (in real-time) by B, C, D, and so on to continue the conversation with A in a group.

3.2. Layers of The Meaning of Social Media Text (Denotation and Connotation)

From a semiotic perspective, digital media texts are signs, which are built on signifiers. Markers are information in the text that is put forward in writing or in conversations on social media using text (chat). Because digital media text is seen as a sign, the text is built on two layers of meaning: denotative and connotative. Denotation is an informational layer, which is everything that is conveyed that can be perceived by the reader. The informational layer consists of conversations in the form of text (chat), pictures, videos, and music. This informational layer deals with communication matters.

Informational layer analysis is a first-level semiotic analysis (denotation), which is the dissection of linguistic messages (denotation).

The second layer of meaning is called connotation, and it contains symbolic, socio-cultural, and ideological meanings. Connotation is the second-level semiotic analysis that dissects connotative messages, which are represented through symbols. The second marking (connotation) is the development of meaning from the first marking in terms of concepts and terms of form (metalanguage).

This paper analyzes fake news spread on social media using semiotic analysis. However, before conducting a semiotic study of fake news in digital media, the characteristics of media users will be explained regarding the attitudes and beliefs of users (respondents) towards fake news.

Internet media has become a gateway to access information for internet users. This means that there has been a shift in the search for information (news) from conventional media to digital media. Users frequently use social media to access information from various media.

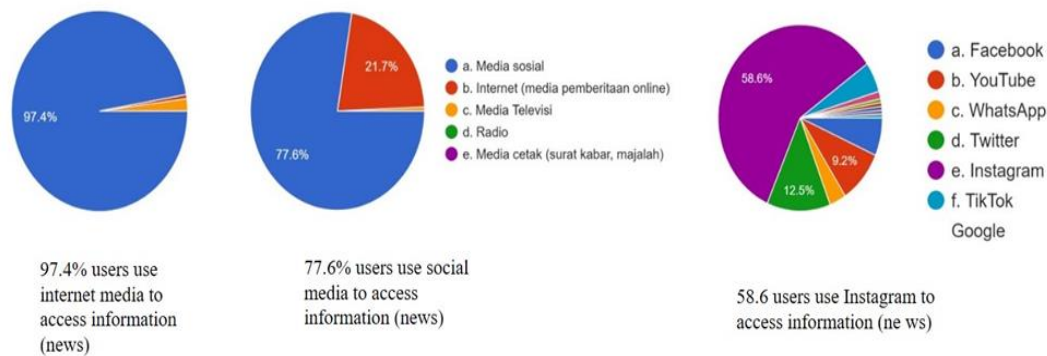


Figure 3 Percentage of internet users who use media platforms as an information gateway.

Based on Figure 3, it can be explained how the internet and social media have dominated the easy dissemination of information by internet users. Users have been given the ease of accessing information, so the data in Figure 2 shows that users tend to prefer internet media, especially social media, to access various types of information. One of the factors that support the use of social media as the main access to information is the flexibility of time and place, where users can obtain information anytime and anywhere.

Semiotic analysis (denotation and connotation) focuses on fake news. Fake news spread on social media is one of the problems related to meaning that can change the perspective and behavior of internet users (society). The survey conducted by Mastel (2019) showed that 44 percent (a total of 1,146 respondents) received hoax information every day, and 17 percent received hoax information more than once per day. This finding is supported by Tchakounté (2020). 59 percent of social media users have communicated using hoaxes.

The meaning of fake news depends on the reading of signs (messages) by internet users. Reading signs by internet users in the process of interpreting a message in fake news through two orders of meaning, namely denotation and connotation, reading fake news is the ability to read and understand the meaning of messages through symbolic interactions that can produce literal (informative) meanings in the form of linguistic and non-linguistic signs used (images, videos, etc.) and connotative meanings (Barthes, 1957). The informative meaning, called denotation, is the meaning of the message as it is (literal), and the connotative meaning is what is motivated by the ideology or interests of the hoax producers.

A hoax is a message built by several elements, namely the source of the sender, the transmission channel, and the recipient. The source of the hoax sender is an individual or group who manipulates the truth by providing an attention-grabbing title, images that reinforce the message, and comments using persuasive language. Transmission channels are digital media used

to spread hoaxes, such as social media. Furthermore, the recipients (readers) are internet users; anyone can access information online.

Reading hoax messages on social media at the denotation level conveys a universal message in society. For example:

1. Messages about the dangers of vaccination. For example:
 - Covid-19 vaccination is not safe and has deadly side effects
 - Covid-19 vaccines are deadly and dangerous
 - AstraZeneca Vaccine can cause death
2. Message related to religion. For example: the Covid-19 vaccine is considered haram
3. Messages scare people. For example:
 - Covid-19 vaccines are very dangerous and produce toxins
 - Covid-19 vaccines take its toll
 - The dangers of Vaccines fear people Vaccinate
4. Message related to technology. For example: there is a microchip in the Covid-19 vaccine.

The layer of meaning at the connotation level is how to respond to the hoax message so that it can change people's perspectives and behavior. Connotation is the meaning of the action in the denotative message. The universal meaning of the COVID-19 hoax has an impact on changing public perceptions of the COVID-19 vaccination. Connotation meaning is represented by keywords. Vaccination language is dangerous, takes its toll, contains toxins, and has a vaccine chip. People are hesitant and afraid to vaccinate. Hoax news that conveys the message of the dangers of vaccination (the negative effects caused) causes citizens not to want to be vaccinated.

Detik (2021) delivered the news with the title "Three Main Reasons for Indonesian Citizens Refusing COVID-19 Vaccine". According to the latest survey, Detik (2021) reported that 34 percent of Indonesians do not want to be vaccinated. The main reason is concerning doubts about vaccines' safety. A survey conducted by researchers from

the Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs (JHCCP) found that there is still 34 percent of Indonesians do not want to be vaccinated. It was found that the older age groups, 55 years and over, were the most reluctant to be vaccinated. About 40 percent of respondents from this age group said they did not want to be vaccinated. The main reason is safety concerns.

An example of fake news is entitled “People Who Have Been Infected with Covid-19 Have Stronger Immune Response Than Those Who Have Been Vaccinated)” as seen in Figure 4.

Narrative posts are circulating on Twitter claiming that people who have been infected with COVID-19 will have a stronger immune response than people who have received a 2-dose vaccine. In the post, he attached evidence of his claim by showing a report in the form of an article, which was officially published by the Office for National Statistics. It was found to be a false claim. The official report used as evidence for his claim makes absolutely no comparison of which is more immune between people who are vaccinated and people who have been infected with COVID-19. The main point presented in the report shows that people who have been infected with COVID-19 rarely catch it a second time. The report does not address the reporting of COVID-19 infections from people who have been vaccinated.

Hoax news that has spread on social media has become consumed by the public. They consume hoax messages through the process of reading linguistic messages and connotations. Linguistic messages are hoax information conveyed in social media texts, and connotative messages are symbolic exchange processes that result in the meaning of actions (changes in beliefs and attitudes). Layers of meaning that can become victims of public information are hoax messages that produce social codes or social meanings in society that have an impact on changing attitudes and behavior. There are texts (messages) on social media containing hoaxes that are conveyed to the public (social media users).

An example of a hoax message is: “At the beginning of the vaccination program, COVID-19 survivors were not included in the vaccination target. The reason is that people who have been exposed to COVID-19 and recovered are considered to have antibodies to fight the coronavirus” (Source: <https://www.alodokter.com/>).

The meaning at the denotation level is the linguistic and informational message conveyed by the text above. The denotative message of the news text is that survivors do not need to be vaccinated because they already have antibodies. This denotative message is recommended and conveyed logically so that it is scientifically proven to be true. At the connotative level, the denotative message is interpreted connotatively so that it produces the meaning of action, namely changes in attitudes and behavior. For example, COVID-19 survivors refuse to be vaccinated.

[HOAKS] Orang yang Pernah Terinfeksi Covid-19 Memiliki Imunitas Lebih Baik Ketimbang yang Divaksin



Figure 4 The distribution of hoaxes (Source: <https://www.kominfo.go.id/>).

Hoax news texts have a big impact on social change in society. This happened, for example, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Social media is the most widely used application for interacting and communicating and being the target of sending hoax news. Based on Kominfo data, Kominfo found 9,546 hoaxes on the Internet in 2021 (<https://eppid.kominfo.go.id/>).

Social media is a social network that has changed how we interact and communicate. The first pattern, allocation, is a pattern of information dissemination from one source to several points spread simultaneously; second, conversations, patterns of communication and interaction between individuals or groups that can take place in real-time; third, consultation, a communication pattern that functions as a medium of information that can be used for various jobs or affairs, for example, consulting with doctors, architects, lawyers, and others; fourth, Registration is a communication pattern used to obtain information from the public for specific purposes (McQuail, 2010). Hoax news can spread through these four patterns. Hoax news can contain consultation (advice) in conversations between users on social media.

4. CONCLUSION

Social media as an information gateway makes internet users consume social media texts. The symbolic exchange in the dissemination of information and conversation (chat) produces connotative meanings, namely, the meaning of actions in the form of changes in beliefs (knowledge), attitudes, and behavior of internet users. Fake news is also a social event that is circulated through the exchange of symbolic signs. Internet users' ability to recognize that news or information that contains hoaxes depends on their skills and mastery of knowledge in using the internet and social media. Users need to have the ability to be critical of various pieces of information accessed on the internet (social media).

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