

FACT-CHECKING IN THE AGE OF MISINFORMATION: LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES FOR ACCURATE REPORTING

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ABSTRACT

Fact-checking journalism has become a common practice to counteract misinformation. In an era of widespread disinformation, the factuality of information is crucial. This research explores linguistic strategies for fact-checking accurate reporting. With a focus on factuality, linguistic approaches are analyzed to identify effective methods in combating misinformation. Specifically, we studied whether there are differences in perceptions based on Linguistic Strategies for Accurate Reporting, dan how often fact-checkers conduct fact-checking. It integrates linguistic understanding with journalism practice to strengthen the reliability of information presented to the public.

Keywords: Fact-checking, Journalism, Linguistic strategies, Misinformation

INTRODUCTION

Misinformation comes in various forms, spanning from unintentional errors in journalism to deliberate acts of spreading hoaxes, propaganda, disinformation, and the

contentious term "fake news." One crucial question is whether and how this misinformation impacts individuals. Some studies have found that fact-checking has a corrective influence on public beliefs, while others

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suggest its impact is minimal and, at times, even counterproductive.

In today's digital landscape, the proliferation of information has provided unprecedented access to knowledge and news. However, this accessibility also presents a significant challenge—the rampant dissemination of inaccurate information. The age of information has concurrently become an era of misinformation, where inaccuracies, distortions, and falsehoods spread readily through various communication channels. In this context, the necessity of accurate reporting and robust fact-checking methodologies cannot be overstated. This article delves into the heart of this issue, with a focus on "Fact-Checking in the Era of Misinformation: Linguistic Strategies for Accurate Reporting." The purpose of fact checkers and fact-checking organizations is to increase the knowledge through the research and dissemination of facts mentioned in statements, either published or recorded, made by political figures or any other individual whose opinions have an impact on the lives of others (López-García et al. 2021).

Currently, there is no consensus on terminology within the community discussing misinformation and inaccurate information. Generally, two criteria differentiate existing

terminology: truthfulness and intentionality. Some experts prefer using "misinformation" to refer to all forms of inaccurate and erroneous information, regardless of intent, while others lean toward the more contemporary (yet polarizing) term "fake news." Other scholars restrict "misinformation" to unintentional inaccuracies, reserving "disinformation" for deliberate deception. "Propaganda" typically pertains to intentionally political information, although its truthfulness may range from false to true yet manipulative.

METHODS

Research methods that can be used in the study titled "Fact-Checking in the Age of Misinformation: Linguistic Strategies for Accurate Reporting" will include several approaches to analyze and linguistically check information to ensure accuracy in reporting. The research method applied was qualitative with a phenomenological approach, and involve interviews with linguists, journalists, or media practitioners from TVRI, Tribun Timur, and Kompas TV Makassar, to understand how they check the accuracy of information based on linguistic elements.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

General Overview

This qualitative study heavily relies on data sources obtained through interviews with journalists from TVRI, Tribun Timur, and Kompas TV Makassar. Focused on "Fact-Checking in the Age of Misinformation: Linguistic Strategies for Accurate Reporting," the research aims to gain insights into how these professionals understand and employ linguistic strategies in online journalism.

Qualitative interviews are crucial for obtaining firsthand perspectives, providing a deep understanding of how linguistic strategies are used to check the accuracy of information. Integrating these interviews enhances the study's comprehensiveness, offering a nuanced view of the role of linguistic strategies in combating misinformation. The qualitative data enriches and complements the overall findings, contributing to a well-rounded perspective on the topic.

With a focus on linguistic strategies in accurate reporting, the research highlights the crucial role of information verification, cross-checking with various sources, and understanding the ethical perspectives of journalism. The conclusions drawn

from this research provide a better understanding of how journalistic practices and linguistic strategies can strengthen the reliability of information presented to the public.

Discussion of Research Findings

The qualitative research conducted for "Fact Checking in an Age of Disinformation: Linguistic Strategies for Accurate News Reporting" relied heavily on interviews with journalists from leading media channels top, namely Tribun Timur, Kompas TV and Simak Berita. The main goal of this study is to delve deeper into the field of "linguistic fact-checking strategies" in the age of misinformation. Recognizing the importance of gathering information directly from experts, qualitative interviews have been used as an important method to gather the nuanced perspectives of experts in this industry .

Here interview with news media channel :

Question 1 : How does the media usually check the veracity of the information you find in the news or online articles?

TVRI:

A journalist emphasizes the rigorous fact-checking process in their editorial office to combat

misinformation. They stress the importance of verifying information, especially from social media, by directly engaging with fieldwork, conducting interviews with reliable sources, and ensuring accuracy in their audiovisual content. The overarching goal is to counteract hoaxes and maintain a commitment to truth in their journalistic endeavors.

Kompas:

The shared objective of various media formats, including online, audio, and visual platforms, is to deliver accurate information aligned with real-world facts. Typically, reporting involves a team with distinct roles: a cameraman capturing visuals and a reporter crafting news narratives. Notably, at KompasTV Makassar Bureau, efficiency is highlighted as a video journalist takes on both roles, showcasing adaptability in the pursuit of informative and accurate content.

Tribun Timur:

The key takeaway from the provided perspective is the necessity of diversifying information sources to ensure a balanced and accurate understanding of events. Emphasizing the importance of not relying solely on one media outlet, the suggestion is to engage with at least three online

sources and multiple television channels for comprehensive insights. The focus is on cross-checking information to combat misinformation, especially in the digital and social media age. Additionally, the call to prioritize trusted and reputable media underscores the responsibility of consumers to seek out reliable news in an evolving media landscape.

Question 2 : Have journalists ever had difficulty identifying misinformation in the news?

TVRI:

The speaker highlights a smooth teamwork dynamic, minimizing obstacles in their work. They attribute any challenges to technology constraints, particularly network issues, such as those encountered during live Zoom interviews. However, they clarify that obstacles related to information sources are rare, and most issues revolve around internet connectivity. Overall, the emphasis is on effective collaboration within the team and addressing technology-related challenges for seamless information gathering and reporting.

Kompas:

The speaker asserts that encountering difficulties in their work is uncommon, as their primary

responsibility when faced with information discrepancies is to verify facts. Reporters leverage their extensive contacts, including authorities like the Police Chief or Makassar City Police Chief, to ensure accurate information. In cases such as a murder on Tolepuli Street, where immediate on-site reporting may not be feasible, established relationships facilitate the verification process. The emphasis is on avoiding misinformation in reporting, underscoring the importance of thorough fact-checking before presenting news to the audience.

Tribun Timur :

While there are sometimes difficulties in identifying misinformation, it does not happen very often. Generally, information can be verified immediately. Reporters make every effort to ensure the veracity of the information. In some difficult cases, longer efforts may be required, but almost all information can be verified properly.

Question 3 : What linguistic strategies do journalists/media think are most effective in checking the truth of news?

TVRI:

The speaker underscores a meticulous strategy of constant fact-checking, emphasizing the importance

of reporters going directly to the field for verification. They highlight the need for balanced news coverage, ensuring that interesting issues are presented with perspectives from ordinary sources and experts, maintaining impartiality. The commitment to balance extends to political matters, where even vulnerable figures like the President are covered impartially. Additionally, the speaker emphasizes the necessity for balance in the duration of news segments, ensuring equal representation for various viewpoints and maintaining independence as a public broadcaster, despite individual preferences. Overall, the core principle is a dedication to unbiased, comprehensive, and balanced news reporting.

Kompas:

The speaker emphasizes a meticulous approach to verifying information by consulting multiple online news sources and conducting interviews with relevant parties, especially when details may differ. They stress the importance of prioritizing accuracy over speed in news reporting, highlighting the tendency of some online media to prioritize quick dissemination without thorough fact-checking. The speaker encourages information consumers to

be discerning in choosing news sources, particularly in a world that values news accuracy. Additionally, the use of resources like the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI) is recommended for language precision, ensuring that information is conveyed correctly and aligns with linguistic guidelines. Overall, the conclusion underscores the significance of a careful and thorough verification process for accurate and trustworthy news reporting.

Tribun Timur :

The speaker emphasizes the effectiveness of firsthand verification by journalists at the scene of an incident to confirm facts or debunk hoaxes. Direct observation and consultation with relevant authorities, such as the police, are highlighted as crucial journalistic practices. For readers, the recommendation is to rely on credible media sources and cross-check information through online searches. The importance of public literacy is underscored, urging individuals not to unquestionably believe information on social media and instead validate details through trusted media outlets. The conclusion emphasizes the significance of critical thinking and verification in navigating the digital landscape to discern between factual reporting and misinformation.

Question 4 : How can journalists carry out fact checking more efficiently in developing news situations?

TVRI:

The speaker highlights the rigorous editorial control and monitoring processes in a newsroom, emphasizing the importance of accuracy and balance in reporting. They mention the need to cover all aspects of political candidates' activities, ensuring comprehensive and certain coverage. The editorial office maintains constant communication and coordination with reporters, exercising control to prevent the dissemination of hoax news. The risk of institutional damage is underscored, emphasizing the collective responsibility of both reporters in the field and the editorial department. The speaker also addresses the prevalence of hoax news on social media, emphasizing the reporter's role in checking and verifying information, including scrutinizing the sources of news to ensure reliability. Overall, the conclusion emphasizes the careful scrutiny and control mechanisms in place to maintain the integrity of news reporting and prevent the spread of misinformation.

Kompas:

The key takeaway from the provided perspective is that reporters play a crucial role in securing accurate information by conducting fieldwork. Their responsibility extends to obtaining insights from all parties involved in disputes or conflicts to maintain a balanced and fair report. The "check and recheck" approach underscores the importance of thorough fact-checking, involving the confirmation of information from competent sources directly. This diligent process ensures the validity of the information being reported, emphasizing the commitment to accuracy and reliability in journalism.

Tribun Timur :

The speaker highlights the significance of swift information dissemination in the digital age, emphasizing the option to gather information quickly from relevant authorities. While physical presence may not always be necessary, sending reporters to the scene remains a common approach to ensure factual accuracy. The role of reporters on the ground is crucial, especially in large events, where they play a key role in obtaining accurate information for fact-checking. The strategy includes providing preliminary information to the public promptly, even without

official confirmation, with a commitment to follow up with verified details. This approach ensures the information conveyed remains both timely and reliable, maintaining a balance between urgency and accuracy in news reporting.

Question 5 : Comments or suggestions regarding the problem of disinformation in the news or linguistic strategies that you want to share.

TVRI:

The speaker emphasizes the importance of responsible narrative creation in journalism, steering away from provocative content and prioritizing a calming approach. They stress the adherence to rules and guidelines, especially in the context of elections, ensuring that news coverage aligns with public service objectives rather than pursuing sensationalism for profit. The commitment to checking and updating information, explaining from various perspectives, and maintaining sensitivity in topics like underage Cawapis or issues related to molestation, rape, or suicide reflects a dedication to ethical reporting. The focus remains on public service rather than advertising revenue, distinguishing TPR from commercial private TV. Overall, the conclusion underscores the media's commitment to

responsible journalism that prioritizes accuracy, guidelines, and societal well-being.

Kompas:

In summary, the speaker advises against relying on a single media source for information and stresses the importance of cross-checking through multiple outlets. They emphasize the need to read at least three online media sources to obtain comprehensive information and combat misinformation. Additionally, the speaker advocates for watching multiple television channels for comparison. The conclusion underscores the significance of choosing reliable sources, particularly mainstream media, over digital and social media platforms that prioritize speed without ensuring accuracy. The overall message is that, especially for the younger generation, cross-checking information across various sources is crucial to reducing misinformation and gaining a more accurate understanding of events.

Tribun Timur:

In conclusion, the speaker emphasizes the accessibility of fact-checking tools, particularly search engines like Google, to verify the accuracy of information. They highlight

the importance of using reliable sources, such as established news outlets like *Tribun Timur*, for obtaining credible information. The cautionary note extends to social media, urging users to be vigilant and avoid quick trust in information circulating on these platforms. The example of an incident involving an anonymous account underscores the potential dangers of spreading unverified information. Ultimately, the conclusion emphasizes the need for users to exercise caution, verify facts, and rely on credible sources before sharing or trusting information, especially when navigating the landscape of social media.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

This study, conducted through interviews with journalists from TVRI, *Tribun Timur*, and Kompas TV Makassar, brings attention to journalistic practices that prioritize thorough fact-checking and linguistic accuracy for accurate reporting. Key findings include a meticulous fact-checking process, minimal obstacles in identifying misinformation, and effective linguistic strategies like field spot checks and a focus on language precision. In decision-making contexts, the research explores direct insights from media professionals. TVRI stresses

the significance of examining information comprehensively, especially from social media, involving fieldwork and interviews to ensure audiovisual content accuracy. Kompas TV Makassar emphasizes the common goal of various media formats for efficient and accurate content presentation. The discussion section reinforces findings with insights from the Eastern Tribune, highlighting the importance of diversifying information sources for a balanced understanding. Community involvement in confirming information through online searches and multiple news sources is emphasized as a preventive measure against misinformation, particularly in the digital and social media era. The study delves into linguistic strategies for accurate reporting, emphasizing continuous fact-checking, on-the-ground verification, and a commitment to news balance. TVRI prioritizes balanced coverage and fair treatment of political issues, while Kompas TV stresses a careful approach through consulting various online sources and conducting interviews. Tribun Timur underscores direct verification by journalists in the field and consultation with authorities. In conclusion, this research not only describes journalistic best practices but also recommends future exploration, including advanced

technologies, long-term impact studies, cross-media analysis, and linguistic challenges in user-generated content. Together, these findings contribute to understanding the crucial role of linguistic strategies in accurate news reporting in the digital age.

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