

Language Play found in Tahilalats' Instagram Social Media Account, Perspective on Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract This research focuses on language play found in the Instagram account named @ tahilalats. The problem of the study discussed in this research is about the types of language play which are at work in the visuals. The purpose of this research is to contribute to the linguistics field of study in the context of digital age 4.0. The data obtained by the researcher are the Instagram visual strips sourced from the Instagram account named @ tahilalats. Data collection techniques are a two-weeks observation, selecting random samples from the @tahilalats account and sorting the relevant data based on the focus of the study. This research employs the theory of critical discourse analysis. The findings of this study are the types of language play in the form of homonyms, polysemy, and *plesetan* or word puns.

Keywords: *Language play, Tahilalats. Humor.*

1. Introduction

Communication is carried out with the purpose of providing information to the interlocutors. This also applies to communication in social networks [1] suggests that social networking is a site where anyone can create a personal web page, then connect with friends to share information and communicate. If traditional media uses print and broadcast media, then social media uses the internet instead. Social media invites anybody who is interested to participate by contributing feedback openly, giving comments, and sharing information in a fast and unlimited time. One social network that shares fast and unlimited information is the Instagram application. This application provides photos and videos that contain information.

When communication is ineffective and does not sufficiently employ language in accordance with the acceptable conventions, communication fails as the consequence. This also applies to social networks. The researcher chooses the Instagram account @tahilalats since the account has apparently created a confusion among the internet users due to its unorthodox way in delivering the humor to the readers. This confusion can be confirmed by peeking at the column section which is laden of comments suggesting that the readers are lost, missing the cues when attempting to understand the visualization made by the @tahilalats account. The bewilderment experienced by the account's followers is masterminded by the

account owner named Nurfadli Mursyid who is renowned for packing the information on his account using language play and visualization.

The @tahilalats account boasts its unique style that stands out among other Instagram accounts. When information is presented explicitly elsewhere, the @tahilalats account chooses to be implicit in its humor. The account followers are expected to be puzzled with the visualization, some will succeed in getting the intention of the creator while some others will fail. When they are able to grasp the intention of the visualization they will elicit the funny part of the joke and those who cannot interpret the meaning of the information will feel uneasy or confused. The sole purpose of the account owner however, is for entertainment only.

[2] defines language play as the way people find pleasure in playing with language as a form of enjoyment by manipulating several linguistic features such as words, phrases, sentences, a part of a word, groups of sound, and series of letter into doing things they do not usually do. The types of language plays according, include word plays, inter-language word plays, malapropism, plesetan/'slip of a tongue', and slang. In a recent study, described language play makes use of sound and syllable play, spelling play, homonym play, polysemy play, idiom play, personification and comparison, metonymy, synonymy and antonymy game, hyponymy games, referent visualization, analogy, and entailment.

One specifically peculiar language play is *plesetan*, referring to 'pun-like' word play. The intention is to arbitrarily manipulate symbols within the language to signify something. Explained that plesetan can be described as producing maximum number possible of statement and meaning formation using the arbitrary nature of the relation between meaning signifiers and empirical reality. In relation to the forms of *plesetan*, he divided it into three as follows.

- a. A self-serving type. This emphasizes on the enjoyment purpose of playing with language without serving any goal or referring to anything outside the realm of language.
- b. Alternative type. *Plesetan* that proposes an alteration or reinterpretation to the currently existing things that society has already recognized.
- c. This oppositional type, it provides reasoning and reference that confrontatively subvert or flip what is or is already prevalent in society. *Plesetan* of this type is not just replacing one sign or meaning with another one, but it radically reverses and frontally resists the existing, acceptable meaning.

Humor is generally mild and funny. People respond to humor in various manners as well. Some will be triggered to laugh with just a simple visualization of images . However, the @tahilalats account invites people to analyze or understand all the present cues contained in the image more carefully in order to laugh. It is because the joke is in the word play.

[3] argues that humor is a quality that prompts readers to feel ticklish or amused when responding to peculiarity or bizarre sensation which may be resulted from a combination of inherently funny sensation, pitiful empathy to human consciousness and a sense of sympathy.

[4] suggests that humor is an integral part of a literary work, it is one the elements that appeal to the readers, it helps a work to develop an individuality.

Comic is an art form that uses motion **Figs** which are arranged in such a way that forming a tangle of stories. Typically, comics are printed and published above paper and equipped with text. Comics can be published in various forms, ranging from strips in newspapers, to magazines. to form a separate book [5].

Humorous Tahilalats Comic Discourse has an advantage because of the way it is delivered through writing, which can lead to discourse that is only funny if delivered in written form, not oral. In addition, the image becomes an important part that can not be separated because it serves as a context to cause cuteness [6].

2. Research Method

This study uses a qualitative method. [7] mentions that qualitative research can be used to look at and describe a situation or an object in its context; find meaning or elicit a deep understanding of a problem with making sense out of the qualitative data; images, words, and events as well as the "natural setting". The confusion experienced by followers of the @tahilalats account was due to the misunderstanding attributed to the intention of Nurfadhli Mursyid as the creator of the language play humor in the account. This method will be comprehensively describing the language play.

This research is based on the analysis of critical discourse in the form of language play that will answer the problem of the study. The first step taken by researcher is to observe the instagram visual strip for two weeks, the data are sourced from the @ tahilalats account. Then the data are sorted, ones that are picked are based on their relevance to the focus of research. This research's objective is to understand each type of the language play which are operating.

The visual data suspected to contain language play are found as many as 15 on the @tahilalats account. This study discusses three visual images. The found language plays are, namely (1) homonymy, (2) polysemy, and (3) *plesetan* (punny word play)

3. Results And Discussion

The existence of humor in image visualization due to language games. [3] states that the theory of humor is very numerous, none of which are exactly the same, but none of them can describe humor as a whole, and all tend to be influenced by one another. Humor is not always expressed in verbal form, but also present in the contextual form. This can be seen in the @tahilalats comic strip where the form of humor shown is textual humor.

This research also found something new, especially in language games. Previous research that discussed with the same data revealed a lot of language games located in morphemes and others. One research that discusses the Instagram account @tahilalats with the title Discourse Humor Satiris in Sastrasiber on tahilalats Instagram Account. Research says. The existence of humor because of the presence of language games which lie in the use of morphemes, the word 'rice' is the same as the formation of the morpheme 'which means' to have' and 'ass' which means' butt' when combined to become 'assed' so as to give a sign that there is word play in the use of language [8].

Furthermore, in another study that discusses the Instagram account @ tahilalats with the title Humor Creation Technique in Tahilalats Comic Strip at Webtoon. This research discusses about humor found two aspects of humor creation, namely aspects of language and logic. Aspects of language found include misunderstanding techniques, sound plays, irony, and bullshit. Then from the aspect of logic found include analogy techniques, impossibilities, and themes [9]. Next on other research on language games in Humor Discourse on Meme Comic Indonesia Accounts on Instagram and the implications for learning Indonesian in high school. This research is based on the meme phenomenon which is now increasingly mushrooming on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Path, and Instagram. One of the most phenomenal and loved by people is Instagram. Instagram is a photo sharing application that allows users to take photos, apply digital filters, and share to various social networking services, including Instagram's own [10]. However, this study found language games in the form of homonyms, polysemics and *plesetan* type.

3.1 Homonym Type

Bentuk Permainan Bahasa Homonim (BPBH)



Fig 1:

Perempuan: “*Tolong...tolooooong*” (“Help me!”)

Laki-laki 1 : “*Ada apa?*” (“What is going on?”)

Laki-laki 2 : “*Ada apa?*” (“What is going on?”)

Fig 2:

Perempuan : “*Orang itu mencuri hatiku*” (“That guy has stolen my heart”)

Fig 3:

Laki-laki 1 : “*Gue kira apaan*” (“What a waste of time”)

Laki-laki 2 : “*Lebay*” (“How annoying”)

Fig 4:

Perempuan: “*Ngga tau dengan cara apalagi untuk dapetin uang*” (“How am I supposed to earn more money another time”)

The image above was a comic starred by one female and three male participants. The woman was panicking and screaming for help in the first panel, then two young men came over and asked for her wellbeing. Then, the second panel illustrated a man ran away from the woman, she explained that her ‘*hati*’ (heart/liver in English) had been stolen. In the third panel the two young men left her because they thought the woman’s problem was nothing to panic about and call her as a waste of time. Finally the fourth panel, the woman kneels down and cries for not knowing what else she could use to earn money. The true intention is meant to play with the homonym of ‘*hati*’ which shares the same pronunciation and spelling with another word of a different meaning. The woman actually refers to ‘*hati*’ as in the literal meaning which denotes to her own liver. [11] defines ‘*hati*’ (liver) as a reddish-colored organ in the upper right of the abdominal cavity which functions to absorb and digests nutrition and produces bile secretion. However, two young men of the third panel interpreted the word ‘*hati*’ in its figurative form which refers to ‘*feeling of love*’, thus calling the woman was fussing about a nonsense.

[12] confirms this possibility of different interpretation by arguing that a written language will bring about an effect. This effect will bring up a variety of meanings if the reader does not know the context. Similarly, this can happen to followers of the @tahilalats account if they are unable to grasp the intended context of image visualization, they will feel uncomfortable, confused and will not get the joke at all.

3.2 Polysemy Type

Bentuk Permainan Bahasa Polisemi (BPBP)



Fig 1:

Laki-Laki 1 : “*Aku lihat kamu selalu terlihat tak ada masalah, selalu bahagia setiap hari kok bisa seperti itu?*”

(“I reckon that you never seem troubled and always look happy, why is it?”)

Fig 2:

Laki-laki 2 : “*Kamu mau tau kuncinya?*” (“Do you wish to know what is the key?”)

Fig 3:

Laki-laki 3 : “*Aku tak pernah peduli dengan masalah orang lain*” (I never care for anyone’s problem)

Fig 4: -

The visual above has two male participants, in the first panel the man in gray asks the man in orange on how the man in gray manages to not seem to have any life problem. Then he answered, ‘do you want to know why?’ Then, he continued saying that he never cared about other people's problems. There is a polysemy play in the second panel, which means the word ‘kunci’/ ‘key’ could have more than one meaning ‘Key’/ ‘Kunci’ could also be polysemic with the word ‘solution’. Thus, what he means is that the solution to achieve happiness in life is through ignoring other people's problems. On this strip, there will be a confusion if there is a lack of understanding on language play and also the context provided in the visual.

3.3 Plesetan Type

Bentuk Permainan Bahasa Plesetan Kata (BPBPK)



Fig 1

Laki-laki 1: “Kak aku mau join sama geng-bel ini supaya terkenal, boleh ga ? aku akan lakukan apa pun deh!”

(How can I sign up to this gang, bro? I wish to be as famous as you and I’ll do anything for you all!)

Fig 2:

Laki-laki 2: “Syaratnya kamu harus banyak kuota aja”

(All you need to have is plenty of internet package)

Fig 3:

Laki-laki 1: “Asik kuota doang sih banyak, yang penting aku bisa join dengan geng paling keren di sekolah ini!!”(Nonverbal : That’s it? I got plenty of that, now I can join the most famous gang in this school!!)

Fig 4:

Laki-laki 2: “Tether-nya udah nyala? (Have you shared the Wi-Fi connection already?)

Laki-laki 1: “Udah kak” (Yes I have)

The image illustrates a conversation between four male students. The first panel tells about a younger boy who wants to join his upperclassmen’s gang called 'geng-bel'. In the second panel three older boys tell him that there was only one condition for entering the gang, he is required to have large supply of internet package with him. The younger boy is initially on cloud nine thinking that the condition is very easy. However, finally, the younger boy feels a let down as the seniors only want him to share his internet with the other gang members in the fourth panel. The first panel contains a word play of "gang-bell" which is meant to sound like 'gembel'(beggars). This word play is further made accurate when it is found that the upperclassmen are actually too poor to afford mobile internet and only take advantage of the younger boy. The comic invites the readers to analyze the connection between panels of the

strip displayed, if they are not able to capture the association they will get confused, otherwise if the followers are able to perceive the intent then they will be amused [13].

4. Conclusion

Communication is carried out with the purpose of providing information to the interlocutors. This also applies to communication in social networks, contents in @tahilalats instagram account demonstrates its own style in communicating messages using visual humor as a means to achieve the communication goal. Some of the followers of @tahilalats account may be able to capture the intention, but arguably some others struggle to understand the purpose of information from the visualization. In order to be able to obtain the intention of the information, followers of the @tahilalats account are prompted to think critically for grasping the context. If they succeed in cracking the hidden contextual cues, they will be able to enjoy the humor contained within

The method used by this account to bring followers to think critically is to employ language play. This research finds that the language plays which are at work among others are; homonyms, polysemy, and *plesetan* (puns, word play). The researcher found 15 visualizations indicated to use language play. Researchers took three samples to describe the forms of language plays,

The finding of this study shows the role of language in the study of critical discourse analysis of the digital age. One of them is the utilization of language play in the social network, Instagram account named @tahilalats is the household name when it comes to this. This research also aims to contribute to the development of linguistics. This research hopefully adds insight to the study of language play on social networks and can be a reference for further research development.

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