Meaning of "Status" in "Whatsapp Applicationas a Form of Persuasive Communication between Individuals

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Abstract

This research aims to find out the meaning of "Status" in the Wharsapp Application as a form of persuasive communication between individuals among students of the Master of Communication Sciences, in the Moestopo Post-Graduate Program, using new media theory and phenomenological theory and symbolic interactionism. Through the constructivist paradigm, this qualitative approach uses phenomenological methods. Data collection technique by conducting interviews with 10 students of the Post Graduate Program in Communication Sciences, Prof. Dr. Moestopo University (Beragama), Jakarta. The interview was conducted through messanger's Whatsaap app. Techniques for data analysis of phenomenology. The results showed that status is interpreted as a symbolic form of persuasive communication. Symbols are exchanged as a form of persuasive communication in the form of photos, images, videos, and even emoticons. Through these symbols, individuals feel attracted, and persuaded, and respond to the status, so that the communication process runs, the uploaded status contains certain information, symbolic expressions of the feelings of informants or related to work, hobbies and in the daily life of informants, and even veiled meanings known only by status uploaders.

I. Introduction

In essence, in social life requires communication to be able to interact with one another. Communication is a process-an activity that has many separate but interconnected steps over time (Brent D. Rubent and Lea P. Stewart: 2013).

Through communication we build relationships with various types. Communication involves receiving messages and creating messages and converting them into usable information. The process of communication creates and interprets messages that enable us to interact with one another and by involving the environment around us.

Responding to messages and converting them into information that we normally use, involves an activity that is often referred to as receiving the information we normally use, involving an activity that is often referred to as receiving information or interpreting. Our interpretation of the existence of an information is not a tangible object that can be sent from an individual, organization or society to other circumstances.

Communication is the process of delivering messages by someone to other people to tell, change attitudes, opinions or behavior either directly orally or indirectly through the media. In this communication requires a reciprocal relationship between the delivery of messages and recipients namely communicators and communicants (Hasbullah, et al: 2018)**.**

Along with the progress of the times, communication has also experienced rapid progress in technology. Thus, in communicating the community when communicating orally or in writing in the form of chat. Chat is a communication program on the internet directly with communication opponents who are both online using the internet. Communication via chat can be in the form of text messages or voice messages.

Related to that, communication by writing in the form of chat messages on cellphones or mobile phones uses the language used in a shorter and more interesting form. Therefore, the message language used on mobile phones that are widely used by today's society is formed in chats that connect communication between users, one of which is through Whatsapp. Whatsapp is an application that is used by various groups as a messenger very easily. In the current era, the Whatsapp application, many people have used it in the form of chat or chat between individuals or groups/groups that can accommodate up to hundreds in the group. Whatsapp is a simple way to communicate with friends, co-workers or family.

According to data from Kominfo, 116 million people in Indonesia use Whatsapp as their instant messaging communication medium. Lots of people who use WA (what is called by the audience) cannot be separated from the services and useful features provided by this application. As many as 63 million Indonesians are currently active internet users and 95% of Indonesians use the internet to access social networks. This new media era has made social media the main prima donna for establishing social relationships in cyberspace. With a smartphone that supports the WhatsApp application as one of the contemporary social media that is widely used by digital natives. As a creative generation in using technology, digital natives use WhatsApp as a medium of communication today.

The Whatsapp application, in addition to being used for private chats or in a group to facilitate group communication, Whatsapp also has a feature or what is commonly referred to as Whatsapp "status". In Whatsapp, users can also upload "status" or photos or events that occur every day that the account owner wants to post on the Whatsapp application. This Status feature can be used properly by users which can be used to capture their latest activities, share important information, places to increase existence, and much more. Using the "status" feature is also very easy. Something like videos and photos can be uploaded in this "status" feature of Whatsapp. Based on the description above, then the purpose of this study is to "analyze the meaning of "status" in the Whatsapp conversation application as a form of persuasive communication between individuals?" through new Media Theory and Phenomenology theory and symbolic interactionism.

Referring to previous research with the same theme, which is related to whatsapp, which was conducted by Edi Suryadi, M. Hidayat Ginanjar, M. Priyatna (2018), entitled The Use of Whatsapp Social Media and Its Effect on Student Discipline in Islamic Education Subjects , indicating a significant effect between the variable x on the variable y. Furthermore, research conducted by Rahartri (2019) entitled "Effective Communication Media Today (Case Study on Scientific Information Services in the Puspiptek Area), concluded that whatsapp is an effective communication medium today that is most widely used by users in the Puspiptek area when they need information services. And research conducted by Trisnani (2017), , Regarding the Utilization of WhatsApp as a Communication Media and Satisfaction in Delivering Messages Among Community Leaders, stated that community leaders use wa as a communication medium in conveying messages, the information conveyed is more effective and is a distinct satisfaction because using information technology (WA) messages are received more quickly to the target . Message content; is; environmental safety, social ties, education, welfare and work and entertainment.

McQuail's new media theory (2011), "New media is a communication technology device with the same characteristics, apart from being only made possible by digitization and its wide availability, its interconnectedness, and its interactivity with an open character." Little John's Theory of Phenomenology (2009) "phenomenology is a tradition to explore human experience, with the assumption that humans actively interpret their experiences by giving meaning to something they experience." While symbolic interactionism emphasizes the relationship between symbols and interactions, and pays attention to the various ways humans use in forming meaning and structure of society through conversation (Morissan: 2013).

Furthermore, Devito's (2010) persuasive communication describes a technique that can influence the human mind by utilizing psychological or sociological data and facts on the communicant who wants to be influenced, namely: a communication process that aims to influence others to agree with the speaker. Persuasive communication is a communication process that is persuasive in nature and invites others to conform to the speaker's wishes without coercion. So it can be concluded that the definition of persuasive communication is a communication process that uses persuasive words with the aim of influencing the listener according to the speaker's wishes. According to the context and theme of this research, persuasive communication is a communication process that invites, and influence and expect feedback from readers or people who see the posted status, whether it be text, photos, images, etc. that provide feedback, and comments. So that the communication process occurs, via Whatsapp.

II. Research Method

This study uses the constructivism paradigm Cresswell (2016) says that human behavior is fundamentally different from natural behavior because humans act as agents who construct their social reality, both through giving meaning and understanding behavior among themselves. The phenomenological method according to Alase (2017) is a qualitative method that allows researchers to apply and apply their subjectivity and interpersonal skills in the research process. With the technique of collecting data by conducting interviews with 10 students of Master of Communication Studies, the Postgraduate Program of the University of Prof. Dr. Moestopo (Religious) in Jakarta, through the Whatsapp application, because it is still in the Covid-19 pandemic situation, so he cannot conduct interviews in person. Data analysis technique John W. Cresswell (2016), proposes a phenomenological data analysis technique in several stages as follows: (1) The researcher begins by thoroughly describing his experience. (2) Find statements in interviews about how people understand the topic, the details of the statements have equal value, develop those details by not repeating or overlapping. (3) Grouping the statements into meaningful units (meaning units), the researcher details the units and writes an explanatory text about his experience, including examples. (4) Reflecting thoughts and using imaginative variations or structural descriptions, seeking all possible meanings and through divergent perspectives, considers the frame of reference for all phenomena and constructs how these phenomena are experienced. (5) The researcher then constructs his entire explanation about the meaning and essence of his experience. (6) The process is the first step for the researcher to express his experience, and then the experiences of all participants are followed after all of that is done, then a combined description is written.

III. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

a. Creating Whatsapp Status can be in the form of Symbols, Text, Images or Photos

The way the informants communicate and interact through the posted whatsapp status is often symbolic, namely in the form of photos, images, videos, and certain emoticons and texts. This means that informants communicate by exchanging symbols to readers of the status. The status is made in such a way, to show or convey a certain message to the readers of the status. Or just to fill spare time, and update its existence.

b. The Use of Whatsapp Status Has Different Purposes

Status-making informants stated that they made statuses with different intentions and purposes. There are those who share information with certain friends, or to all their phone contact numbers that are connected to whatsapp through his whatsapp status. This means that the status created has an informative purpose. Some have the goal of entertaining WhatsApp users through their posts. There are people who make statuses on WA, must have a specific purpose, which is only known by the uploader of the status, because the status and purpose cannot be guessed, and can only be understood by the person to whom the contents of the status are addressed. This means that only certain people can interpret a status uploaded on WhatsApp.

c. Views on the Importance of Creating a Status that contains Certain Information for Whatsapp Users

Whatsapp status is very important for one of the informants, because he uses status for promotion, so it is clear that persuasive communication is carried out by informants, because promotional activities carried out through status on whatsapp are intended to influence readers or people who see their status to be interested in communicating with informants related to the product being promoted. So that the status on WhatsApp becomes important as a promotional medium, as a communication medium, exchanging information, ideas, symbols, feelings and so on. There are those who think that status is important if it contains information, and it is not important if it contains personal posts and information with negative content. This means by looking at the interests from the perspective of the status reader.

d. "Status" is a Form of Persuasive Communication, because it gets Feedback from Status Readers

The status that is posted sometimes wants to get feedback, sometimes it doesn't. This means that the status uploaded by the informant actually does not aim to expect reciprocity from the status reader. Depends on the purpose of the status. There are statuses that are expected to be commented on, but there are also those that are not. Because the status posted is just an update want to get feedback from friends who see their status on whatsapp. This means that the informant wants to invite readers of his status to communicate, because he expects feedback from the status made. In the form of comments, questions, or certain symbols that are exchanged in the communication process, they have given feedback on the status of others when that person's status contains entertainment. This means that the informant is interested in providing feedback if the status he sees is in accordance with what the informant likes, namely things that are entertaining, so that the informant is willing to respond to the status.

e. Whatsapp Status Posts are a Form of Self-expression that is poured to Create a Communication

If the whatsapp status is responded to, it means the whatsapp user understands the status he made, so that the communication process occurs via whatsapp. There are informants whose WhatsApp statuses use text more so that people understand more easily. According to this informant, he often uploads status in the form of text, but has a certain meaning, which only he can understand. This means that the content of the text on the status communicates certain hearts, feelings and thoughts from the informant, so that it is possible that only certain people understand the informant's whatsapp status. Or only certain people who are the purpose of the communication made by the informant who will understand the status made. Whatsapp status, some communicate something and some don't. This is related to the uploaded status content. There is a meaningful status, so that the form of communication can be seen, and there is a meaningless one because the content is not clear. But the point is that it actually still communicates something that represents the uploader of the status.

f. Status on Whatsapp Forms Different Communication Patterns

There are statuses that are very full of symbols, images are also in the form of text and videos, the status updates vary, there are those who sell products, there are also posts about their confusion and also about religion from a person's status we can see his personality and the things that interest a person, whatsapp status forms certain communication patterns for example about his hobbies. The status on WhatsApp that is updated has its own meaning for the uploader and the reader.

This means that we can see the pattern of the status posted by the informants, or by looking at the status of other people, a certain communication pattern is formed. There are users who always make statuses about their hobbies, meaning that they communicate their hobbies/interests through these statuses. There are also those who upload statuses about the products they sell, so they take advantage of the status as promotional media. There are those who make patterns of always uploading posts of their daily activities, there are those who upload quotes, or religious advice, or religious reminder messages based on the hadith, the Koran, and religious lectures, so that their status forms patterns of religious communication, and so on.

g. The meaning of Status for the Uploader and the meaning of the Status for the Reader have Different Interpretations of meaning from the Uploader and for the Reader

WhatsApp application status has the meaning that someone wants to share information / express feelings or opinions or happiness experienced by someone to others in their WhatsApp contacts. Application status means random sometimes providing information and can also be used to communicate, they interpret positively and feel entertained by their whatsapp status. The meaning of status in other people has the meaning of an expression to express feelings or views.

This means, the statuses uploaded on whatsapp are interpreted differently by the uploader, and the reader of the status. So that there is a difference in meaning or there can also be differences in understanding and perception of the communication conveyed through the WA status. To equate the meaning and understanding of the uploaded status, readers will usually be interested in communicating with the status maker, by asking, commenting, or confirming the intent of the status. Then persuasive communication takes place.

3.2 Discussion

Communication is the process of delivering messages carried out by communicators to communicants, where individuals can act as sources of messages conveyed and communicants can be plural or group. The message is conveyed through the media, namely means of communication in the form of print and audiovisual, including hardware technology or tools used as intermediaries for delivering messages that aim to simplify and speed up the delivery of information (effectiveness, efficiency, concreteness and motivation). In communication, the media also experienced developments, which initially used conventional media, has developed into new media, one of which is the internet.

With the internet, it has a strong impact on the development of special media on communication made by individuals to groups. Humans increasingly need media (internet) to communicate with other people. Media is not only in the form of mass and electronic media, but new media are growing and popular, namely online social networking media in cyberspace. The new media is used by the public to express themselves and express their views on something, one of which is through the WhatsApp application.

Whatsapp is a social media that has a simple appearance and is easy to use so that it is in demand by all groups, from teenagers to adults. WhatsApp is designed to make it easier for users to stay connected and communicate anytime, anywhere. WhatsApp provides various features for its users by making sending messages and making calls simple, safe, and fast for free to various types of phones all over the world free. At first, whatsapp was launched as an alternative to SMS. However, currently the WhatsApp social media application can be used to send and receive various kinds of media in the form of text, photos, videos, documents, and locations, even WhatsApp can now be used to make voice calls and video calls.

Not only used as an application for chatting, WhatsApp also innovates by adding a status menu that can be used for every user.To be able to analyze the meaning of status on the WhatsApp application through interpersonal communication, the researcher uses phenomenological theory and symbolic interactionism theory.Phenomenology conceptualizes communication as the experience of self and others in a dialogue. Phenomenology views the problem of communication, like semiotics, developing in the gap between the various subjective viewpoints that one cannot directly experience another's consciousness and that the potential for intersubjective understanding is limited. Phenomenology emphasizes the need for humans to turn to one another and experience self and other in genuine dialogue.

Phenomenologists assume that people's conscious experience of a phenomenon is something that can be actively understood and can be explored more so that it has the ability to be used as a theoretical basis (Littlejhon, 2009). When viewed from the three stages of the synergistic process in phenomenology, namely:

a. Phenomenological Description

Phenomenologists argue that the adjective phenomenological is used to remind us that we are dealing with capta, namely conscious experience.

All informants who use the status menu on*whatsapp*consciously know how often and what they post in status*whatsapp*they. Based on the description of the research results, from the ten informants, they are aware of the intensity of using the status menu on the application*whatsapp*where many of them do not use the status menu very often.

b. Phenomenological Reduction

The purpose of phenomenological reduction is to determine which parts of the description are important and which parts are not. If it is linked based on the answers given by the informants, it means that each status they make sometimes has its own interests but it is possible that the status they make is only something that is not important. Important here means that the status they create contains information that is useful for many people, while for the status that is not important, it does not contain information that is useful for many people, for example the status of daily activities. Where not everyone feels it is something that is useful for those who see it.

c. Phenomenological Interpretation

It is generally intended to explain a more specific or important meaning in the reduction and description of the conscious experience being investigated. Where in this study, the researcher intends to examine more specifically what are the contents of the status made by the informants. Based on the results of interviews that have been carried out, the contents of the status they make include what feelings are being experienced by the informant, the daily life of the informant, responses to the content of a news, product marketing (for one of the informants who has an online shop activity), and religious and entertainment information.

Technically, interpretation is variously called semiotics or hermeneutic analysis. Semiology is the study of the system of symbols or codes. From the results of interviews conducted, the symbols or codes referred to in this study are in the form of videos, images, or texts that are made into status on *whatsapp* by informants. Where, when viewed from the description of the research results, the informant made a status on *whatsapp* contains videos, images and text.

In addition to the discussion described above, the phenomenological tradition has a theoretical assumption that objects, events, or conditions that are present within the scope of direct experience can be used to understand the turmoil that occurs around them, meaning that informants use the status menu on *whatsapp* to give what they are experiencing or what they are doing related to their surroundings, for example there is an informant who makes a status to market the business he is doing, namely an online shop. Another example is one of the informants who has a hobby in the automotive world, so the status he makes is in the form of things related to automotive.

The theory of symbolic interactionism according to Max Weber (Morissan: 2013) that social actions carried out by individuals are driven by the results of social meaning to the surrounding environment. Social meaning is obtained through the process of interpretation and communication of the symbols around it. This theory basically focuses on analyzing individual behavior with other individuals in small groups. This theory is not intended to analyze society on a large scale, such as indigenous peoples or the general public. He pays more attention to the behavior of small communities that have a certain uniqueness in the social interactions between them. Judging from the results of interviews with informants, it was found that the status they made on the application *whatsapp* have the meaning of communication from each informant. Everything (object) in human life has a symbolic meaning. These meanings do not come by themselves, but are presented and then agreed upon and made into symbols. The symbol here is understood as a sign that contains an agreement of meaning. Therefore, human behavior, both as individuals and as groups, is based on the symbolic meanings of the object. What is meant by the meaning of communication here is the message contained in the status they make, including information related to the world of work of informants. In addition, the status they make

also contains symbolic expressions of the feelings they experience, as well as symbolically the daily activities of the informants, which they symbolically display through photos, pictures, or even videos on the status they upload. Intensity of informants in making status in*whatsapp*can also show a symbol of a person's character or personality for example, when someone markets a product through status*whatsapp*indirectly the people or contacts who are connected can judge that a person is a seller of a product.

The symbols exchanged are a form of persuasive communication between individuals via WhatsApp. Specifically on persuasion communication, Burgon and Huffner summarize several opinions from several experts regarding the definition of persuasive communication as follows, First, the communication process that aims to influence the thoughts and opinions of others to match the opinions and desires of communicators. Second, the communication process that invites and persuades other people with the aim of changing attitudes, beliefs and opinions according to the wishes of the communicator without any element of coercion.

In the context of this research, persuasive communication that occurs, namely the status uploaded by an individual, can invite and attract other individuals to communicate by commenting on the uploaded status, without any coercion. Communication can occur effectively and reciprocally. Especially if the status is intended to get a response, or a response from other individuals, especially according to the statement of the informant who deliberately made the status with the aim of promoting the products he offered. From those who do not know about the product, after seeing the status uploaded on whatsapp, then an individual becomes aware, and is influenced to try the product and ask the status maker about the product. So that there is a change in attitudes, and opinions from an individual after seeing the uploaded status, then the status is a form of persuasive communication.

IV. Conclusion

"Status" on the WhatsApp application created by the informants is interpreted as a symbolic form of persuasive communication. The symbols that are exchanged as a form of persuasive communication are photos, pictures, videos, and even emoticons. Through these symbols, individuals feel interested, and persuaded, and provide responses to these statuses, so that the communication process runs, the uploaded statuses include certain information, symbolic expressions of the feelings of the informants or those related to work, hobbies or in everyday life informants, and even hidden meanings that only the status uploader knows.

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