

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Social media always had a place in our life, and now during the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become more inseparable from our communication system. Social media are interactive technologies that allow users to exchange ideas and information through virtual communities and networks (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Social media aims to help its users develop and maintain mutual relationships through effective online communication (Cheng et al., 2017). Before the pandemic, social media had gained many users and helped them retain relationships through online communication. For instance, Instagram had more than 60 million users in Indonesia alone in February 2019.

However, as more people were asked to remain home during the social distancing period, many switched from direct to social media communication to stay connected. It is resulting in the increased use of social media during the pandemic. In fact, according to Kantar Group and Affiliates' research, Spain experienced a 76% increase in time spent on WhatsApp in 2020. Furthermore, Instagram had more than 90 million users from Indonesia in July 2021, which was 20 million more users compared to 2020. These facts demonstrate how the pandemic has affected social media usage worldwide.

Besides connecting people, according to Kaya (2020), social media can increase the public's awareness and help decision-makers make decisions, particularly during an urgent situation. During the pandemic, social media becomes the primary

medium for information retrieval, which (increases public awareness about the COVID-19 virus and) helps people to feel more prepared for it (Kaya, 2020). Social media could increase public awareness during crises, while governments should apply integrated and well-planned communication to increase trust amongst citizens to trigger information sharing and seeking via social networks (Shah et al., 2019). Social media also changed the traditional one-way communication between the citizens and decision-makers, enabling two-way dialogue between the stakeholders (Gokalp et al., 2020). It then enables the decision-makers to increase communication with the community, which helps them provide healthy decisions.

Furthermore, for a governmental organization like police forces, social media can bring some other benefits. Social media can provide criminal information, help police forces confront several pressing issues, help them publish news on their own, promote collaboration with other organizations to increase safety in society, and more (Denef et al., 2012). For instance, social media helped to enlighten the case of Gabrielle Petito, who was reported missing in September 2021. Through social media, police could find Petito's last moments.

Even though social media is a new thing for the Indonesian government, the government still need to be active on social media during urgent situations. In 2018, the Ministry of Communication and Informatics of Indonesia stated that e-government systems in Indonesia are still in migrating stage from manual to online systems. However, governments should be more active on social media to provide dynamic information regarding urgent issues (Alrazaq et al., 2020). Moreover, according to Denef, Kaptein, Bayerl, and Ramirez (2012), (governmental organizations like) police

forces need to use social media to interact with the public, as frequent social media use could affect the relationship between citizens and state agencies. Furthermore, even though social media adaptation requires training, it does not constitute a fundamental change in the identity of police forces (Denef et al., 2012).

The West Nusa Tenggara Regional Police (POLDA NTB) is one of the Indonesian governmental organizations that started to adapt to social media during the pandemic. POLDA NTB is the police service operated by and serving the region of West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Similar to other regional police forces in Indonesia, POLDA NTB has several mission statements, and some of them are: (1) Providing protection, support, service, and guidance to the community; (2) Building a good relationship with the community and other organizations; and (3) Maintaining security, safety, order, and smooth traffic. Before the COVID-19, in carrying out these missions, POLDA NTB relied heavily on the press to connect them with the community. However, with the increased use of social media, POLDA NTB then started to be more active on Instagram in 2020. Then, in 2021, they began to share more of their activities with the community by creating a podcast program, *Podcast Bidhumas POLDA NTB*. They also actively educate and inform the community through infographics they share on Instagram.

Unlike other regional police forces, POLDA NTB also had to maintain and promote security and safety during the World Superbike 2021. World Superbike (WSBK) is an international motorsport road racing series for modified production motorcycles, also known as superbike racing. The latest event was held on November 20, 2021, at the Pertamina Mandalika International Street Circuit, Lombok, West Nusa

Tenggara. As POLDA NTB represents Indonesian Police (POLRI), they were challenged to show their best preparation in maintaining the security and safety of both local and international participants to the global citizens. With an international event going on, it was a great moment to show their competencies to the global citizens and thus build an outstanding reputation.

Social media then became the most effective tool for POLDA NTB to interact with both local and global citizens. Through social media, POLDA NTB could reach million users easily within a short time. They then actively informed the community about their preparations for WSBK 2021 through Instagram. They also shared numerous informative infographics regarding WSBK 2021 on their Instagram.

However, in 2021 public opinion about the Indonesian Police Forces (POLRI) was not very positive. Many scandals dragged some of their officers, resulting in decreasing level of public trust. The public also kept questioning their performances in serving the public even before they got caught up in scandals. There have been many hashtags *#PercumaLaporPolisi*—which translated to 'it is useless to report to the police—on social media due to public frustration (Chaterine, 2021). The writer believes it may become one of POLDA NTB's challenges in interacting with their audience through social media.

POLDA NTB's attempt to reach the local and global citizens through Instagram despite still adapting to social media and facing the public's sentiment is a fascinating discussion. As social media is considered 'new' to many Indonesian governmental organizations, POLDA NTB courageously took a step ahead in interacting with and ensuring the best security to the local and global citizens while

building their reputation during the WSBK 2021. Moreover, they also need to face the public's anger on social media. Therefore, the writer believes that their strategy in interacting with the community through Instagram and their view on social media usage are worth to be analyzed further.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the explanation above, the research problems found by the writer are:

1. During the WSBK 2021, how was POLDA NTB using Instagram to:
 - interact with the local and international citizens,
 - promote the security and safety of the local and international citizens, and
 - build good reputation.
2. Does Instagram as a social media negatively impact the public communication done by POLDA NTB, or does it strengthen them?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the research problems, the objectives of the study are:

1. To analyze POLDA NTB's Instagram posts during the WSBK 2021 and the public's responses toward the posts, to then further identify how their strategy in using social media to interact with the public, promote security and safety, and build a good reputation.
2. To understand whether Instagram negatively impacts public communication by POLDA NTB or not.

1.4 Significances of the Study

There are several significances of this study for the writer, English Letters study program of Universitas Ma Chung, and related governmental organizations.

For the writer, the writer can learn how to apply the theories given in the classroom to her research through this study. The writer can explore more knowledge about linguistics, particularly about discourse analysis. Moreover, the study is very important to the writer as it is one of the requirements to graduate from her university.

Next, the study can be used as a reference for the other English Letters students, who are interested in discourse analysis or communication field.

As the study will present new insights regarding social media usage for police, other related organizations can use it as a reference to strengthen their approach to the community through Instagram further.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

This study focuses on three things, such as: 1) POLDA NTB's Instagram posts on November 2021, which was several weeks before, during, and a few days after the World Superbike 2021; 2) The public's responses toward the Instagram posts in the comment sections; 3) An interview with people who work at POLDA NTB. Furthermore, the writer was the only person who collected and coded the data for this study, and the data did not undergo rigorous triangulations.

The study discusses POLDA NTB's strategy in using Instagram to interact with the public, promote safety, and build a reputation. The found strategy is based on the writer's inferences upon analyzing the Instagram post and mirroring the analysis to

the transcribed interview. It also will discuss how POLDA NTB views Instagram. Hence, the writer used the theory of Discourse Analysis (DA) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze the materials.

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

1. Social Media

Social media are interactive technologies that allow the creation or sharing/exchange of information, ideas, career interests, and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Some of the most popular social media include Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, Tumblr, LinkedIn, and YouTube. However, since the writer mainly discusses Instagram, “social media” refers to Instagram.

2. Instagram

Instagram is a free photo and video application that provides users an instantaneous way to capture and share their life moments with friends (Hu et al., 2014).

3. Instagram Post

A photo or video that an Instagram user shares on the platform.

4. Discourse Analysis

A research method for studying written or spoken language and its relation to social context, which aims to understand how language is used in real-life situations (Luo, 2020).

5. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA examines how language produces and moderates social and psychological phenomena; however, CDA emphasizes the role of language as a power resource (Willig, 2014).

6. World Superbike 2021 (WSBK 2021)

An international motorsport road racing series for modified production motorcycles, also known as superbike racing, which was held at the Pertamina Mandalika International Street Circuit, Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara on November 20, 2021.