Assessing the Impact of TikTok's Language Translation Feature on the Deaf Community's Satisfaction within Gerkatin in Bandung City

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Abstract:- **This study is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the language translation feature within the TikTok application and measure its correlation with the satisfaction levels of deaf individuals affiliated with the Gerkatin Community in Bandung City. We employ a qualitative research methodology utilizing a case study approach, complemented by the Miles and Huberman model for qualitative data analysis. Data collection was conducted through meticulous observations and comprehensive in-depth interviews. The introduction of a language translation feature in TikTok presents notable implications for its user base, particularly for those who are deaf. Findings from this study indicate that the deaf community expresses a significant degree of satisfaction with TikTok's language translation feature. This approval is chiefly due to the enhanced accessibility to information, with a tangible increase in comprehension when video content includes translated text. This enhancement aligns with the tenets of New Media Literacy Theory, especially within the facet of Critical Consuming. Despite the positive reception, the study has identified areas where the feature could be refined, such as the customization options regarding text size, style, placement, and the duration for which the text remains on screen. These aspects, if addressed, could potentially amplify the usability and utility of the translation feature for the deaf community.**

Keywords:- Language Translation Features, Deaf People, Tiktok, Communication.

I. INTRODUCTION

The growth of information and communication technology has seen a swift increase in usage. The completeness of sensory perception becomes essential, especially with the rising use of the internet. News, facts, and data can be considered information if it is maximally receivable by the community; therefore, information distributors must consider all aspects that can hinder the distribution process and seek solutions to overcome these obstacles. Physical limitations stand as one of the most significant barriers in information receptivity, and this must be cleverly circumvented by creating alternative ways to produce information.

In 2020, the Vice-Chairman of the Regional Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah, DPD) of Gerkatin in Lampung Province, Chandra Wijaya, voiced his frustration upon watching news broadcasts on television during the Covid-19 pandemic because he could not understand the content and meaning of the news due to the absence of text or a sign language interpreter [1]. To address this, many media companies, including the TikTok app, an audio-visual-based information platform, have initiated a new language translation feature expected to facilitate the understanding of information for the deaf.

To fulfil this right, the deaf must also be equipped with the ability to read beforehand. As concluded by Azizah Arumsari in her journal titled "Reading Learning Strategies for Deaf Children," the learning methods applied to the deaf differ from those of the general population; they involve repetition, storytelling, and learning to read through lip movements [2]. Once the deaf have acquired reading skills, they can access information from the TikTok app by reading the provided translations. This phenomenon gives this study its urgency to evaluate the language translation feature as a medium that bridges the information gap experienced by the deaf community.

The researcher conducted a state of the art research to avoid replication of findings from previous literature reviews. In this research, the author found several differences from previous studies, ranging from theory, method, subject, and most significantly, the focus of the research itself. In this study, the writer uses the language translation feature in the TikTok application as the research object because this feature is relatively new, and the writer believes it represents a substantial difference compared to previous referenced studies.

In this research, the writer has chosen deaf individuals associated with the Gerkatin Community as research subjects because Gerkatin is the first community to be operated directly by the deaf. Based on pre-research interviews with the Chair of Gerkatin DPC Bandung, there are 263 deaf individuals within the Gerkatin Community.

The selected expert informant is a teacher and coordinator at BK SLB Negeri Cicendo Bandung. Based on various discussions and details in this study, the researcher intends to examine the utilization of the language translation

feature based on the deaf's ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate video-based information on the TikTok application, with the research titled "Evaluation of Language Translation Feature Utilization on TikTok with the Satisfaction of the Deaf in the Gerkatin Community in Bandung City.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. New Media Communication

The new media communication theory is introduced by the authors because the object of this research is the language translation feature found in the TikTok application, aligning with concepts proposed that new media can be divided into five types, encompassing interpersonal communication media, interactive game media, information search media, collective participation media, and broadcasting media substitution [3].

B. New Media Literacy

This research presents the new media literacy theory, particularly the critical consuming component, to assess the satisfaction of deaf individuals in the Gerkatin Community as the research subjects towards the language translation feature on TikTok. This is based on three indicators discussed in this theory. The indicators are as follows:

➢ *Analysis (Focus on Semiotics)*

This refers to an individual's ability to deconstruct the media messages contained within media content. More specifically, this indicator is seen as a semiotic textual analysis focusing on language, genres, and codes [4].

➢ *Synthesis (Focus on Main Ideas)*

This pertains to an individual's ability to integrate media content with their own perspectives, or to compare information between two contents with the same main ideas but different sources [4].

➢ *Evaluation (Focus on Content Criticism)*

This relates to an individual's ability to question, criticize, and doubt the credibility of media content/information. Compared to the previous analysis and synthesis, this indicator represents a much higher level of criticality. In evaluation, users are required to interpret the content of social media considering various issues such as identity, source validity, and the novelty of information [4].

C. Computer-Mediated Communication

Wood and Smith [5] stated that CMC is a technological interaction in daily life. With the development of technology like CMC, a social structure is formed that allows each element within it to communicate in all directions without exception. This social structure is commonly referred to as a network society, which describes the phenomenon of community communication activities through the use of information and communication technology (ICT) [5].

In line with CMC, a new term related to mediated communication has emerged, namely social mediated communication. In practice, theories of computer-mediated communication and, more specifically, social mediated communication have brought significant changes in the way we interact, work, and participate in social life. These changes include the emergence of new phenomena exemplified by various social media platforms, such as the TikTok app discussed by the authors in this research.

D. Social Media

The author introduces this theory because this research examines TikTok, an application that enables humans to engage in social interaction. Van Dijk (2013) in Nurbaya (2017) noted that social media is a platform focusing on user existence, facilitating their activities and collaboration. Therefore, social media can be seen as an online medium (facilitator) that strengthens relationships between users and serves as a social bond (Nurbaya & Nasrullah, 2015).

E. TikTok

It is a video-based social networking application that allows individuals to seek entertainment and package information in an interactive form. Based on data found, there were 1.68 billion monthly active users (MAUs) of TikTok worldwide as of the first quarter of 2023. Compared to the previous year, this figure represents an increase of 4.8% with a total user count of 1.6 billion (Rizaty, 2023). With this surge in users, it can be concluded that there is a growing interest in the TikTok application, allowing its user base to include various social strata, including the deaf.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Before This research employs a qualitative methodology with a case study approach aimed at providing an in-depth understanding of the research topic. The case study chosen by the writers is an instrumental case study, where according to Stake (1995) as cited by Creswell (2015), it involves a specific case, issue, or problem and then selects a limited case with the goal to illustrate this issue (Creswell, 2015). The adoption of an instrumental case study is due to the emergence of a new feature in the TikTok application, namely the language translation feature, which is a specific issue. Thus, the authors delve into related cases and discover that in 2020, the Gerkatin community in Lampung expressed concerns about their limited ability to receive information regarding COVID-19 due to the absence of a language translation feature or sign language interpreters (SLIs). Therefore, the authors wish to enrich the specific understanding of this problem and its benefits for users with hearing impairments.

The authors utilize Miles and Huberman's model for their qualitative data analysis, where the data analysis is conducted interactively and constantly until data saturation is achieved, indicating that no new data or information is emerging (Praditia, 2013). In-depth research needs to be conducted to demonstrate the quality of this study through the results of observation data and extensive interviews with the research subjects, namely the deaf individuals integrated within the Gerkatin Community in Bandung and teachers from SLBN Cicendo Bandung regarding the use of the language translation feature on the TikTok application.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After The findings of this research indicate that individuals with hearing impairments feel satisfied with the language translation feature on the TikTok application. This satisfaction is attributed to the increased capacity for information absorption through translated text on video content, evaluated based on the Critical Consuming aspect of the New Media Literacy Theory. However, there are several shortcomings identified in the feature that could be refined, such as text size, style, position, and duration. Here are the detailed findings:

A. Analysis (Focus on Semiotics)

Based on observation and in-depth interviews with key informants and experts, it was found that individuals with hearing impairments are able to semiotically understand the content of videos based on words and sentences spoken by the creators because they are already equipped with the ability to read. They can read the text (language translation feature) displayed, even though the video may need to be replayed and the text read multiple times, and they generally understand the context of the video. This aligns with the expert informants' opinion that individuals with hearing impairments are visual learners; therefore, they can understand the context (content) of the video but are unable to conclude the video content in its entirety.

When linked to new media communication theory, this aligns with the functionality of new media that facilitates the rapid and global exchange of information, enabling individuals to be active in information distribution (Nugroho, 2020). In relation with the critical consuming aspect of the new media literacy theory, individuals with hearing impairments can analyze content viewed on social media because they have been previously equipped with good reading skills (Kamaruddin & Rizky, 2018).

B. Synthesis (Focus on Main Ideas)

Observations and in-depth interviews with key informants and experts revealed that individuals with hearing impairments are unable to synthesize the content (videos) they watch. Upon investigation, the authors recognized that this inability was due to two main reasons: first, the informants did not understand what they watched, and second, although the informants understood the video content, they were unable to articulate it back in full sentences, resulting in fragmented words or incomplete sentences that cause ambiguity. This is in line with what the expert informant said that individuals with hearing impairments are unable to summarize the video content fully due to mixed-up diction, disorganized sentence patterns, and erroneous structure. If individuals with hearing impairments summarize something in their own language, it can create ambiguity for people with normal hearing.

Linked with the critical consuming aspect of new media literacy theory, individuals with hearing impairments are not fully capable of performing synthesis or focusing on the main ideas of the content they see on social media, as they struggle to grasp information and rearticulate the thoughts and knowledge they have acquired.

C. Evaluation (Focus on Content Criticism)

The results of observations and in-depth interviews with key informants and experts suggest that individuals with hearing impairments are somewhat able to critique the validity of the content (videos) they view. The observations indicate that the informants can identify some indicators that suggest the validity of a content piece, but a significant limitation is that they do not seek the same information on different accounts. Their investigations are restricted to the account and video selected by the author, even though the author granted them freedom to explore the TikTok application. Experts said that all news they see is presumed true without further investigation.

When related to the critical consuming aspect of the new media literacy theory, individuals with hearing impairments are not fully able to evaluate the content seen on social media, as they focus only on the content or source they have received without exploring the same topic from different sources.

V. CONCLUSION

The evaluation of the utilization of the language translation feature on the TikTok application among the members of the Gerkatin Community in Bandung City was examined by the authors based on the New Media Literacy Theory's Critical Consuming aspect, which specifies three indicators for determining the ability to interpret media content in certain social, economic, political, and cultural contexts: analysis (focus on semiotics), synthesis (focus on main ideas), and evaluation (focus on content criticism). Based on the results found from observations and in-depth interviews, the authors conclude that the participants are satisfied with the language translation feature on the TikTok application. This can be seen from the scores given by the four key informants, ranging from eight to ten.

The level of satisfaction is based on the increased information absorption capacity when the language translation feature is present on video content. However, the informants mentioned that there are shortcomings that need to be addressed to enhance the functionality of the feature for the satisfaction of individuals with hearing impairments. These include the need to change the font size and style, the inadequate position of the text, which sometimes covers the content and clashes with the account name and captions, and the text duration, which tends to be too fast and difficult to read, requiring the informants to replay the video and read the text repeatedly.

With the widespread phenomenon of digitalization, language translation on the TikTok application becomes a feature that can be relied upon as a medium to bridge the information gap experienced by individuals with hearing impairments. Although the information delivered is not entirely efficient, the use of this feature provides access to information for individuals with hearing impairments.

Given the issues found in this research related to communication barriers between the authors and key informants during interviews, the authors hope that in future

research, sign language interpreters (SLIs) can be present in every interview to facilitate communication and strengthen the obtained data.

Considering the issues found in this research related to the informant selection process, the authors recommend participating in community activities organized by the deaf community or similar groups to gain a general understanding of individuals with hearing impairments and to establish warm relationships that can facilitate researchers in finding informants.

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