The Ambiguity Encircling the Government's Declarations Regarding the COVID-19 Circumstances

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Abstract

In this comprehensive research, we delve into an analytical examination of the official statements made by the government concerning the COVID-19 pandemic situation. The primary objective of this investigation is to decipher and understand the nuances of the government's communication to ensure that the general populace is not misinformed or led astray by any ambiguities present in these statements. To lay a theoretical foundation for this analysis, we have employed the principles of semantic studies, which provide valuable insights into the meanings and interpretations of words and sentences.Given the nature of our research, a descriptive methodology has been chosen. This approach is deemed most appropriate because it offers a detailed representation of the collected data. To gather this data, extensive observations were conducted, specifically focusing on the portrayal of government declarations in various mass media outlets. By scrutinizing these pronouncements, we aim to shed light on areas where the government's messaging might be unclear or open to various interpretations.The culmination of this research presents an elucidative account, highlighting the instances and specific terminologies where the government's communication appears ambiguous. This ambiguity, whether intentional or accidental, has the potential to impact public understanding, especially concerning the pressing matter of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our findings underscore the need for precise, clear, and unequivocal communication, particularly in matters of public health and safety.

Keywords: Semantic, Uncertainty, Covid-19, Semantic Studies, Government's, Pronouncements

I. Introduction

In the face of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, clarity and precision in communication are of paramount importance. However, there have been instances where the government's statements pertaining to the COVID-19 situation have been characterized by a degree of ambiguity. This vagueness in official pronouncements can often lead to confusion among the public, raising concerns

about the transparency and efficacy of the government's approach in addressing the health crisis. The lack of definitive clarity in the messages disseminated can further exacerbate the challenges faced by communities in responding effectively to the pandemic. Such ambiguous communication, whether intentional or unintentional, necessitates a deeper examination to understand the potential implications for public health, trust in leadership, and the overall management of the crisis. The Covid-19 pandemic is not over. Millions of people worldwide have been infected with Covid-19, and more than 3.7 million have died. The Covid-19 infection was first discovered in Wuhan, China, in late December 2019. The virus is rapidly spreading to much of the world, including other parts of China and Indonesia virus cause. However, the virus can also cause severe respiratory conditions such as lung infections, Middle s only mild respiratory diseases such as the flu in most cases severe respiratory Syndrome (MERS), Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), and even death.

However, it was later discovered that the coronavirus is also transmitted from person to person. The Covid-19 virus can infect anyone. When it occurs in old age, pregnant women, people with certain diseases, smokers, or people with weak endurance, the effect can be more dangerous and fatal— symptoms of coronavirus range from colds to severe respiratory diseases such as pneumonia. Symptoms of a Canters for Disease Control and Prevention viral infection can appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus. People who live or travel in areas endemic to the Covid-19 virus have certain risks. Health workers treating patients infected with Covid-19 are at higher risk and must be consistently protected through appropriate procedures to prevent and manage infections. The droplet then fell on a nearby object. If another person touches the object contaminated with the dropsies in the eyes, nose, or mouth, the person can become infected with Covid-19. Therefore, keeping a distance and essentialist 1 meter from sick people is essential.

After President Jokowi announced on March 2, 2020, that there were positive Indonesian citizens, March 2 2020ablished a task force to speed up the handling of Covid-19, starting in April 2020, the Government is increasing its campaign to use masks, hand wash with soap and keep a distance as a measure to prevent further spread of Covid-19 infection.

The background analysis poses a couple of essential questions that need addressing. Firstly, there arises a question about the clarity and precise intention behind the Government's official statements regarding the Covid-19 issue. It's crucial to discern what exactly the Government intends to communicate through its declarations about the pandemic. Secondly, another matter of concern is whether these official statements have successfully instilled a sense of calm and reassurance among the community amidst the ongoing outbreak of the Covid-19 virus. It's of paramount importance to determine if the government's announcements have been efficacious in alleviating public anxiety and fostering a sense of security.

The study endeavors to achieve a couple of significant aims. The foremost objective is to decode and understand the underlying meaning and essence of the statements promulgated by the Government in light of the Covid-19 crisis. By understanding these announcements, we can better comprehend the official stance and the intended messages for the populace. Another crucial aim is to raise awareness among the general public, making them more cognizant of the risks associated with the covid-19 virus and the necessary precautions to mitigate these risks. This heightened awareness could be a pivotal step towards more informed and safe practices during these challenging times.

I.   Literature Review

Language can be likened to a multifaceted tool for communication that is meticulously structured around words, phrases, and sentences. Within the playful and practical realm of linguistics, language operates as a social semiotic, grounded in both contextual and cultural nuances. It transcends the barriers of oral and written discourse. When perceived from a holistic standpoint, language emerges as a construct that is dynamically shaped by interwoven functions and systems.

In its intrinsic essence, language invariably manifests as text. This "text" is understood as a coherent linguistic unit, which derives its meaning and relevance from its immediate context. When an individual endeavors to convey an idea or sentiment, they utilize a specific format of text. Within this textual framework, the individual strives to achieve their intended communication objective. It's pivotal to note that this format essentially mirrors the inherent system of the language encapsulated in that specific text. Depending on the communicative goals, various text formats and language configurations are chosen.

Language, at its core, is a powerful medium for human interaction, cognitive processing, and asserting the significance of trust within societal constructs. It functions as a bridge for communication and interaction, playing an indispensable role in fostering learning, especially within the realm of linguistic studies. Language can be bifurcated into three cardinal functions: conceptual, interpersonal, and textual. These functions, often termed as "meta-functional" characteristics, each mirror a unique facet of reality. The conceptual function of language articulates physical and biological realities, facilitating the interpretation and articulation of experiences. The interpersonal dimension of language unveils the intricate fabric of social realities, underlining interactions between speakers or authors and their audience, be it listeners or readers. In its textual capacity, language accentuates the semiotic or symbolic realities, shedding light on the construction of text within its context, as elaborated by scholars like Matthiessen and Martin.

From a broader lens, language serves as a representation of various realities – physical, social, and symbolic. These realities underpin the functions mentioned above and reaffirm that language is not just a tool for communication but also a linchpin for forging and nurturing societal connections.

Semantics is a specialized sub-discipline within linguistics, predominantly concerned with decoding the intricate nuances of language meaning. Typically, semantics shares its borders with syntax, which deals with the amalgamation of simpler signs to craft complex symbols, and pragmatics, which delves into the real-world application of these symbols by individuals in specific contexts. By diving deep into semantics, one can gain insights into the evolution and transformation of word definitions over time. Semantics underscores the trajectories of words – their genesis, evolution, and their imprints on the linguistic chronicles, as expounded by scholars like Mulyono.

The eminent linguist De Saussure professed that every linguistic symbol is composed of two intertwined elements: a significant auditory component, termed as "meaning," and an integral interpretative facet. Through the lens of Saussure's theories, "meaning" is perceived as the intrinsic understanding or concept enshrined within a linguistic sign. Consequently, when these linguistic symbols, be it words or morphemes, are discerned, the meaning is essentially the inherent understanding or notion they carry.

The Spectrum of Meaning Types

Language, in its versatile avatar, accommodates a wide array of meanings, each differing based on diverse societal activities and intentions.

• Lexical, Grammatical, and Contextual Meanings: Lexical meaning is intrinsic to words, remaining unaffected by external contexts. When subjected to grammatical transformations, novel meanings emerge, leading to affixation, reduplication, and sentence formations. In contrast, contextual meaning hinges on the lexical constituents within specific contexts.

• Referential and Non-Referential Meanings: Words possessing tangible references, like "horse" or "picture," are deemed referential. Conversely, words like "and" or "because," which lack such concrete references, fall under non-referential categories.

• Denotative and Connotative Meanings: While denotative meaning reflects the actual significance of words, connotative meaning extends beyond, resonating with personal or societal values. For instance, the word "pig" might have negative connotations within specific cultural contexts.

• Conceptual and Associative Meanings: Conceptual meaning remains independent of context or association, while associative meaning arises from non-linguistic correlations. The word "red," for example, might be associated with "bravery" or political ideologies.

• Meanings Embedded in Idioms and Proverbs: Idioms are linguistic units whose meanings cannot be deduced directly from their constituent elements. Proverbs, on the other hand, carry meanings that can be traced back to their original essence through associations.

In essence, the vast tapestry of language is both intricate and fascinating, with its multi-dimensional functions and layered meanings offering endless avenues for exploration and understanding.

The interplay of meaning within the linguistic domain can be regarded as a dance between individual language units. These units, which can manifest as words, phrases, or even entire sentences, are intricately linked through semantic threads. These threads, or relationships, serve to represent an array of meanings, ranging from those that mirror each other closely to those that starkly contrast, or even those that hold multifaceted interpretations or extend beyond their basic interpretation.

When we talk about synonyms in the world of semantics, we refer to those linguistic units that bear a close resemblance in meaning to one another. For example, 'happy' and 'joyful' can be perceived as synonyms because they both convey a similar sentiment of positivity.

On the opposite end of the spectrum from synonyms are antonyms. They present a linguistic relationship wherein the meanings of the units in question stand in sharp contradiction or contrast to each other. The relationship between the words 'hot' and 'cold' serves as a classic illustration of antonyms.

Some words in the vast lexicon of a language are rich in meaning, so much so that a single word might harbor multiple interpretations. Such words are said to be polysemous. For instance, the word 'bark' can refer to the outer covering of a tree as well as the sound a dog makes.

Hypnonymy is a fascinating semantic relationship, wherein the meaning of one linguistic form is enveloped within the meaning of another. Take, for instance, the relationship between 'sparrow' and 'bird.' While all sparrows are birds, not all birds are sparrows. This encapsulates the essence of hypnonymy.

Ambiguity emerges in language when there's potential for multiple interpretations arising from diverse grammatical perspectives. Such ambiguities are especially pronounced in written forms as they may not encapsulate all the nuances present in spoken discourse.

Redundancy, in the realm of language, points to an excessive utilization of linguistic elements, leading to repetition without adding substantial value. For instance, the phrases "The ball was kicked by John" and "John kicked the ball" essentially convey the same message, making one of them redundant in a given context.

Words and their associated meanings aren't static entities. They evolve, morph, and sometimes even transform entirely over prolonged durations. While in the short run, a word might retain its

meaning, over extended periods, its interpretation might shift, sometimes subtly and at other times, drastically. Such changes aren't universal and might impact only select words, influenced by a myriad of factors:

•   **The Progress of Science and Technology**: As technological advancements take place; words adapt and morph to fit the new discoveries and inventions.

•   **Socio-Cultural Evolution**: As societies grow, change, merge, or even diverge, the words they use and the meanings they ascribe to them undergo transformations.

•   **Trends in Word Usage**: Popular culture, media, and global events can lead to shifts in how certain words are used and understood.

•   **Sensory Response Shifts**: Over time, the way individuals emotionally or physically respond to certain words can change, leading to an evolution in the word's meaning.

•   **Influence of Associations**: Words can adopt new meanings based on their associations with events, people, places, or other words.

In essence, the landscape of meaning in language is ever evolving, shaped by both internal linguistic dynamics and external societal forces.

II.   Research Methods

Data management is a meticulously executed process to ascertain the accuracy and integrity of the data that has been harvested. In this endeavor, the author harnesses the robustness of the triangulation technique as a tool to validate and verify the credibility of the assimilated data. By deploying the triangulation method, the author engages in an exhaustive comparative analysis, juxtaposing the insights harvested from a diverse array of online information repositories.

The methodology embraced for the dissection and interpretation of the amassed data is termed 'content analysis'. Within the realm of this analytical approach, the author delves deep into the content, systematically examining and interpreting the intricacies embedded within varied informational sources. The procedural blueprint for content analysis unfolds in a structured manner:

•   Initially, an in-depth exploration of relevant literature is undertaken, immersing the author into material that resonates with the themes and conceptual underpinnings that underscore the writing at hand.

•   Pivotal to this research endeavor is the deployment of descriptive analytical techniques.

The essence of the descriptive method lies in its ability to vividly portray and articulate the outcomes emerging from the data assimilation process. The author's choice of this methodological pathway is rooted in its capacity to render an accurate, nuanced, and holistic portrayal of entities, be

it individuals, ecological settings, linguistic patterns, phenomenological occurrences, or collective entities. For this study, the analytical lens is firmly trained on the official pronouncements emanating from governmental quarters, with the medium of mass media serving as the conduit. The research endeavor is anchored in the real-time examination of these governmental proclamations, with the author astutely attuning to the nuances, subtleties, and commentaries that punctuate these statements.

The data collection technique used is a type of literature study. The author looks for related sources from the source of website data information by the theme carried.

III. Results and Discussions

Researchers took the digital newspaper TEMPO. CO to be the reference material of current research. Reporting from the news, President Joko Widodo or Jokowi appointed Coordinating Ministers for Maritime Affairs and Investment, Luhut Binsar Panjaitan as the coordinator of implementing community activities or emergency restrictions PPKM in Java Bali. The rules came into effect from July 3, 2021, to July 20, 2021. Since then, they have held daily stakeholder meetings to ensure the control of Covid-19 during the emergency PPKM. He also periodically makes statements to the media and the general public about dealing with Covid-19. Many of Luhut's ideas about pandemic control during the emergency PPKM did not attract public attention. Tempo summarises a number of his controversial statements.

At the beginning of the implementation of emergency PPKM, Luhut predicted that the increase in positive cases of Covid-19 would decrease from mid-July 2021. This prediction is based on the virus's incubation period after community activities, or emergency PPKM restrictions were imposed on July 3, 2021. "Therefore, if yesterday (emergency PPKM) is turned off on 3 (July 2021), the launch could be delayed around the 12th". "So, no later than 13-14 (July) can still go up and down", he said in a press conference quoted by the Ministry of Maritime Investment of the Republic of Indonesia, Monday, July 5, 2021.

Meanwhile, the Government will implement an emergency PPKM on July 3-20, 2021, to reduce the number of Covid-19 patients to less than 10,000 per day. On July 15, 2021, the https://www.covid19.go.id page found that the number of positive cases of Covid-19 in the country reached 56,757. Thus, the total confirmed cases registered were 2,726,803. There were 480,199 active cases, 36,726 more than last year.

If observed in semantic studies, the above ambiguity cause ambiguousness in mind. Ambiguity is the occurrence of multiple meanings due to different grammatical interpretations. At the beginning of the sentence in the first paragraph, Luhut has provided information to the public regarding his predictions for Covid-19 patients post PPKM. "If we start yesterday (emergency PPKM)

on July 3 (July 2021), I think it is likely that the start will be delayed around the 12th," Luhut told a news conference. The affirmation is in the sentence "the 12th we will only see a slowdown" from the statement. Slowdown in Indonesian means "plan". The slowness referred to here is a reduction in speed in rising patients who contract the covid-19 virus. Of course, people who heard this news felt somewhat relieved, a little calm because the increase in case circumstances can be slowed or, in another sense, the reduction in the rise in covid-19 cases.

However, it turned out that on July 15, 2021, the https://www.covid19.go.id page found that the number of positive cases of Covid-19 in the country reached 56,757. Covid-19 patients increased by 36,726. This is, of course, troubling to the public because previously, they knew that after July 12, there would be a slowdown in the increase. This is a statement like this that makes people increasingly distrust the Government'sGovernment's words because the Government cannot be responsible for all the words said.

Earlier this week, Luhut claimed the handling of Covid-19 was under control for the Java - Bali emergency PPKM for ten days. Regarding the availability of medicine, oxygen, and beds, Luhut said the Government was dealing with it, and the situation was expected to improve within 45 days. "So if anyone says the situation is out of control, it is very, very controlled. I show that we are in control in front of them", Luhut said in an online press conference on Monday, July 12, 2021. There are still problems, but the Government continues to improve. "The team is working very compactly. The president gave clear instructions, stating that he was responsible for all of this," the Coordinating Minister for Maritime Investment said.

However, in reality, the above statement is not valid. Deputy Governor of Jakarta, Ir. Haji Ahmad Riza Patria, MBA is, known as Ariza, said that with the number of Covid-19 cases that continued to increase since mid-June 2021, the Provincial Government has had difficulty adding hospitals, beds, intensive care units, oxygen, medicines, even various health facilities such as vitamins. "Of course, it is tough to continue improving hospitals, beds, intensive care units, oxygen, medicines, vitamins, Etc.," Ariza said at Jakarta City Hall on Monday, July 12, 2021. Again, Luhut's words were unbelievable. Many people are worried about this. Especially if someone gets very minimal treatment, of course, it will endanger someone's life.

When viewed from a semantic point of view, Luhut's statement gives the meaning of calmness for the community to not panic in the face of the covid-19 virus. The idea that showed Luhut's belief was in the sentence, "this is very, very controlled". The use of the word "very" is an implication. Decimation is a morphemes process that repeats or changes the colour in whole or part of its basic

shape. This decimation gives a grammatical meaning that indicates that the state is very controlled. There is not the slightest annoying obstacle.

Covid-19 Delta Variant Is Difficult to Control

Luhut asked all parties to understand that the Covid-19 delta variant is out of control. "Understand this delta variant uncontrollable variant," Luhut said in a press conference on Thursday, July 15, 2021. Luhut said the recent spike in Covid-19 cases has not only occurred in Indonesia. He pointed out: The UK and the Netherlands saw an increase in cases of patients on July 13. Dutch Prime Minister Mark Ruttapologized apologised for agreeing to remove the mask some time ago. According to Luhut, the increase in Covid-19 cases in many countries is due to delta variants.

According to research, this variant from India has a transmission 5-6 times faster. "It is a lot more powerful than the previous variant", he said. Luhut also said the Delta variant controls almost all java transmissions. This condition is seen in the PSBB 1 and 2 transmission diagrams compared to emergency PPKM. From Luhut's statement above, it can cause public anxiety. Because previously, he stated that the virus was immediately extinguished, and all could be adequately controlled. However, the reality is different from what he has stated said before.

V. Conclusion

Luhut Binsar Panjaitan, serving as the coordinating minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment, has become the epicenter of public scrutiny and controversy. The reason for this heightened attention stems from his assertive claim that the Covid-19 pandemic situation was under control. This statement, however, has not been validated by the evolving situation, causing a significant disconnect between governmental assurances and the harsh realities faced by the public. Numerous individuals are left disheartened and disillusioned, as they feel their expectations of a better-managed crisis are unmet.

Given the gravity of the ongoing pandemic, it is imperative that such misleading declarations be swiftly rectified in the future. What the public urgently requires is not a multitude of promises but concrete, actionable measures to combat the relentless spread of the Covid-19 virus. Therefore, a cautious approach is necessary, given that the virus continues to pose a significant threat. Such ill-conceived statements from the government also have a direct and negative impact on healthcare professionals, particularly medical technicians who are on the front lines. These individuals require substantial assistance, including but not limited to essential medicines, cutting-edge medical equipment, and other forms of logistical and moral support.

Considering these concerns, the objective of this scientific exploration, aptly titled "Ambiguity of Government Statements Related to the Issue of Covid-19," is to urge governmental

authorities to adopt a more responsible approach in their public pronouncements. The focus should be on aligning their statements closely with concrete factual evidence, thereby reinforcing public trust and facilitating a more informed citizenry. More importantly, the general populace must continue to exercise extreme vigilance and adopt a cautious stance while navigating through the challenges posed by this ongoing viral outbreak.

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