"INSTAGRAMABLE" : SIMULATION, SIMULACRA AND HYPERREALITY ON INSTAGRAM POST

Maria Febiana Christanti, Puri Bestari Mardani, Intan Putri Cahyani, Windhiadi Yoga Sembada

Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta, Indonesia

Email: febiana@upnvj.ac.id, puribestarimardani@upnvj.ac.id, intanputri@upnvj.ac.id, yoga.sembada@upnvj.ac.id

Abstract

The relationship between social media and individuals is complex. Like how humans flock to form an 'instagramable' culture on Instagram. The author examines this complexity using the lens of Jean Baudrillard in writings on simulation and simulacra. Baudrillard's main argument is that nothing in our culture is "real" in any sense. "Simulacrum", consider as something that is real, which is a depiction or copy of something that does not exist. Instagram is a social media that makes humans addicted to signs and symbols through "instagramable" photos and videos. This research provides knowledge about the potential reality of reality from polished photos or videos uploaded to Instagram. This study uses qualitative research with a phenomenological approach and uses dramaturgy theory (front and backstage) to reveal the reality and falsehood of "instagramable" images. This study analyzes using four stages, namely reflection of the deep reality, covering and denaturing the deep reality, covering the absence of deep reality, having nothing to do with any reality; it is its pure simulacrum. The result of this research is that simulacra are more than a process. Each stage carried out by Instagram users characterizes a level of simulation. Research gives insight to us that "instagramable" simulations are imaginations that are not entirely true or not true.

Introduction

This manuscript presents a blend of the concepts of simulation, simulacra, and hyperreality (Baudrillad, 1999) with the formation of a real virtual culture (Castells, 2010, p.355). Network societies are the result of networks of various organizational dimensions and social practices (Castells, 2010). The emergence of the internet network led to the expansion of the internet which resulted in no longer limiting the internet to human life. "Mass-self communication" is a term coined by Castells with the intention of new media that have information-sharing features that have the potential to reach audiences personally. This is what sparked Castells' idea that a new culture was formed, namely the "culture of real virtuality".

This culture is formed from a communication network that is inclusive of all cultural expressions and individual experiences so that something virtual (virtual) becomes an important dimension of human reality. From the utilitarian view, the existence of the internet, social media makes it easier for many people to communicate with each other. In contrast to postmodernism's view, it seems that the relationship between social media and the individual is complicated. The development of communication technology affects the

simulation process occurs. Social media causes individuals to stay away from reality. They flocked to create a new world, namely virtual reality (virtual reality).

Technology and media have the power to produce, reproduce signs and objects (Baudrillard, 1999). Therefore, reality has nothing in common with what is represented. This simulacra concept also occurs on Instagram social media which also requires interaction. In interacting there is an identification process to create a pseudo-reality.

The author wants to briefly explain why Instagram is important to research. Instagram is a favorite social media. Instagram periodically improves the available features such as photos, comments, live videos, and so on. This is what is meant as the formation of interaction. This opportunity is of interest to like content that is referred to as 'instagramable'. This opportunity is also used as a way of marketing to promote. The meaning of the word Instagram comes from the name of the application itself. The word able in English means capable. So instagrambale means something worthy to be uploaded to Instagram. The power of Instagram is connected to various e-commerce platforms, and users spend a lot of time playing Instagram.

At first, there were no proper criteria to call photo or video uploads instagramable. However, this marketing strategy is used by entrepreneurs and captured by the virtual community who constructs that instagramable is the creativity of users to make their posts more interesting with the help of several posts or photo editing applications in interesting spots to be used as photo backgrounds, to maximize the results of these posts (https http://tekno.tempo.co/read/1443132/ramai-pemakai-instagram-term-instagramable-pun-muncul/full&view=ok)

This thought led the author to relate the concepts of simulation, simulacra, and hyperreality. Simulation is humans inhabiting reality. The difference between real and fake, real and imaginary lies in almost non-existent boundaries. Simulation ignores reality or categories such as true or false, real or fictitious, production or reproduction blend into one. This mingling becomes a reality that humans live. This mixing is called simulacra (Baudrilllard, 1999).

Based on the two concepts of Castells and Baudrillard, the author realizes that in the present and the future humans will expand the communication network. Humans cannot be separated from the use of technology. Dependence on this technology will lead humans to virtual reality. Baudrillard's thinking supports the fact that technology will help humans perform simulations to hyperreality, where something virtual becomes more original and real than the actual reality.

This knowledge supports the author's observations in seeing how Instagram users display something called "instagramable". The author invites readers to think critically about how simulacra concerning hyperreality are formed in Instagram. The development is so fast. One interesting phenomenon is the fake charm of 'selfie' photos. Users can easily take advantage of the features on Instagram to make themselves more attractive. Just one click can make their faces look smooth and slim. This digital polishing phenomenon shows that there is a sign of beauty and perfection. So many people do 'like'. Then, the 'like' given by other people becomes an addiction to repeat this scam.

'Instagramable' isn't just about self-portraits. 'Instagramable' includes the habit of polishing photos or videos before they are uploaded that strays from reality. The filters provided reflect the perfection of the physical and the surrounding environment. Such as, skin whitening, lip coloring, jaw shaper, nose shaper, brightening photos, creating an elegant atmosphere, and so on. The author is moved to examine this phenomenon more deeply using Jean Baudrillard's thoughts on

hyperreality. What users have uploaded and trusted by other users, has taken the responsibility of the value of honesty. This simulation shows that there is a shift in the meaning of freedom to fake oneself.

This hyperreality culture is a free commodity that can lead the audience to the opium to display far from reality. The strange thing is, being free to express themselves here is not free to be what they are, but to shape themselves as they want to intend to produce content as a commodity that has value for the sake of the existence of social and economic climbing. Users use Ome Tv as social media to construct the truth according to the tastes of the actors concerned. Simulacra was formed through the help of the internet network. The languages created by these actors are codes to realize a belief system. Based on this background, the author will investigate how Instagram users as actors construct 'instagrambale' through the concepts of simulation, simulacra, and hyperreality.

Method

This study uses qualitative research "Qualitative research begins with assumptions and the use of interpretive/theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research emphasizes the process and meaning of reality without any measurement of quantity or frequency (Neuman, 2003). This study uses a phenomenological approach (Damayanti, 2019). The researcher argues that this approach will describe the general meaning of Instagram users who like to polish photos or videos that become 'instagramable'.

This method helps to describe the process of producing content on Instagram, from taking photos or videos, editing, to the decision to upload photos or videos. This study collects data using interview and documentation methods. Sampling using a purposive sampling technique. This sampling technique aims to investigate Instagram users who routinely upload content and make edits before uploading it. The analysis technique uses a data reduction model, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and data verification.

This research method uses a dramaturgical study by Erving Goffman (1959) from his book entitled "presentation of self in everyday life". Dramaturgy emphasizes that humans do drama when interacting socially, which in the end leads to social change. This thinking is in line with the changing human phenomenon in uploading photos or videos. Images uploaded on Instagram have been influenced by filters that humans are addicted to doing. Instagram users seem to be in a drama show, they must prepare their appearance well. The author will use this theory to observe the front and backstage (Goffman, 1959), so that he can see the authenticity and fakeness of "instagramable" images.

Results And Discussion

The author wants to emphasize the three core ideas of Baudrillard, namely simulation, simulacra, and hyperreality (Baudrillard, 1999). The difference between the three is that simulation means an imitation or an artificial reality which still refers to real reality. Baudrillard also states that simulation opposes representation. Representation comes from the principle of equality of sign and real. The opposite simulation derives from the utopia of the equivalence principle, from the radical negation of the sign as value (p.9).

The second is simulacra, meaning that artificial reality no longer refers to the real reality because the real reality has been closed from its reference (semi-reality). The third is hyperreality which calls reality real (real). Hyperreality is a deconstruction of the previous real reality. The emphasis on the different phases of simulacra and hyperreality, namely on the hyperreality of

everything in real reality, has been replaced in virtual reality.

1. How The Instagram User construct 'Instagramable'

Instagram is the perfect social media for understanding real and simulacrum relationships. The interactions that occur on Instagram are just to show what they are doing. This activity is to get something intangible such as getting "likes" or comments. Another interaction occurs when engagement occurs while scrolling through the feed and viewing all photos and videos. Interaction occurs with those photos and videos.

Instagram is a space where the hyperreality of the appearance of photos or videos is formed. The author concludes from the observation that the hyperreality that occurs on Instagram is the effect of diminishing direct interaction between individuals. So that the virtual world or pseudo-reality is considered real. Instagram is not just a representation of human life, but a reality.

Based on research on how humans find interesting backgrounds, make photos of food that look better, use filters that make them look more appealing than they are. Therefore, something that happens on Instagram looks more real than reality itself. In these contents, Instagram users form hyperreality. Someone showcases the best they have to share on Instagram. The appearance of someone uploaded to Instagram is not necessarily the same as the actual appearance. This is what is often referred to as 'instagramable'.

Instagram users perform simulations that appear as if they are real, but they are not. The hyperreality they display to look 'instagramable' includes an attractive physical appearance (looking beautiful or handsome), good and expensive clothes, and social and economic climbing. The author concludes that what is displayed by Instagram users is an attempt to show the existence of social class in society. Efforts that force themselves to present themselves as perfect, even though they do not happen in real life.

2. Simulation, Simulacra, and Hyperreality

The focus of this section is to investigate how Jean Baudrillard helps us as academics to rethink the human habit of polishing photos and videos. These behaviors are addictive. They cannot escape the virtual life to continue creating hyper-reality content. These imaginations lead us to believe they are real (Baudrillard, 1994). Uploaded photos and those that have been edited using filters and taking pictures with styles that have been arranged in such a way are simulations.

Simulation is not a place, area, or existence, but a model of reality and how to make us think about how reality is produced (Baudrillard, 1999, p.2). The concept of simulation is used to evaluate how users create "illusions, which are called reality simulations. Simulation makes the real reality blurry. Simulation makes the real reality collapse or is replaced with a false one. The depictions on Instagram are the result of production and reproduction into their reality.

This description is different or contradictory. Instagrammable photos and videos seduce audiences by pretending they have something they don't have. The photos and videos do not accurately represent what is depicted. For example, when informants take photos of themselves, photos of food, or other objects, it may not have anything to do with reality. Especially when it comes to the description of the written image. When taking photos of

food, edited with filters distort reality and falsehood.

The author believes that the photos and videos that have been edited are only simulated images, there is no truth. Humans live in falsehoods and replicas of what the world is (Baudrillard, 1999). Instagram distorts our perspective so that users are no longer able to see the real reality. What is happening now is indeed a very thin line between reality and the signs of users who show themselves and real life, with those in simulation. This blending is simulacra. The meaning of simulacra is a world that is built from a mixture of values, facts, signs, images, and codes. A world that is built from a mixture of values, facts, signs, images, and codes (Baudrillard, 1999). Reality, imitation, or fake does not refer to real reality. In other words, the original reality is distorted and closed from its true reference.

The polishing of photos and videos that occur on Instagram is pseudo. In other words, Instagram users perform simulations. The 'instagramable' interaction that is shown to the audience, which is not what it is, is what is called simulacra. The author concludes that simulacra are a lie from signs or images constructed by humans which are far from the original reality. This thinking is based on the communication phenomenon that humans are currently competing to construct a new identity reality on Instagram.

The author will analyze through four stages of simulacra and simulation (Baudrillard, 1999), namely first, the reflection of a profound reality or "the sacramental order", meaning that the picture is a good appearance. At this stage, the simulation has not occurred. According to Baudrillard, the image still begins as a good representation of reality. For example, when

'instagramable' photos and videos are uploaded to Instagram, it cannot be considered a simulation. This is because it could be the image is the original picture of reality. For example, when an Instagram user takes a self-portrait which is an original picture of himself, then the picture is a reflection of a deep reality (Badurillard, 1999, p.6).

The second is the "it masks and denatures a profound reality" phase. This phase is a deviation from reality. In this phase, they believe that the sign is an unfaithful copy. Reality is an "evil appearance" where signs and images are not the same express reality. In the process of polishing photos and images to make them look 'instagramable', users can manipulate images. Users use image settings to improve the displayed photo or video. At this stage, the simulation begins to materialize where there is a slight deviation from reality.

The author analyzes that the second stage occurs, for example, when users take photos of themselves but choose to add filters or edit photos. This is what Baudrillard called that the image is no longer a direct copy of reality. This image becomes a copy of the image of the unfaithful, the meaning of unfaithfulness is that the self-image is no longer the same. The self-portrait is still clearly similar to the original but has been polished. So there is already a distortion from the initial image.

The third is "it masks the absence of a profound reality". At this stage, the image completely covers the original image or reality. Those 'instagramable' photos or videos become copies without authenticity. The mark pretends to be a copy of the same but is not the original. The author explains this third stage with an example when a user uploads a photo of himself to Instagram but decides to change the contrast, exposure, brightness, warmth, highlight, and

others (available in the edit feature). The photo itself is no longer the same as reality. Self-image has changed from the original self-image.

This third stage leads to the idea that there is no representation. Manipulation of photos and videos when using filters or editing has created a new reality of images. The emphasis is that the uploaded self is no longer anywhere else. In other words, users who take photos of themselves are no longer the same as photos of themselves uploaded to Instagram. The photos become instagramable, but the photos have no reference.

The fourth stage is "it has no relation to any reality whatsoever; it is its pure simulacrum". This stage is referred to as the "order of sorcery", where all human meanings are artificially conjured up to appear as references to truth (Baudrillard, 1999). The author calls this a pure simulation. User-uploaded self-portraits have no relation to reality at all. This fourth phase explains that an image reflects another image. This image becomes its reality. In summary, the picture in the fourth phase is very different from the picture in the first phase.

Images can no longer be trusted because they are fake. The image is a hoax from the real thing. The image becomes as if new. The new image becomes a reality, not even realizing that there is the same image in place again. This blurred image is referred to as a false image and a pure simulation. The phenomenon that occurs on Instagram is when individuals experience interactivity such as using artist face filters, mask filters, and so on. Then the users seem to be an artist or something different from themselves. This is called hyperreality.

The author argues that talking about simulacra is not talking about a reflection of reality or not a representative of the initial sign. But it has become a new sign. After the simulacra stage which has no relation to any reality is hyperreality. Hyperreality is a reality that is completely real, even above the real. This reality will eventually replace the previous real reality. In 'instagramable' photos and videos, it is a deconstruction of real reality. The reality that is displayed on Instagram is very different from the self or something that exists. The process of simulacra in photos and videos is more than just a process.

Virtual engineering through the provided filters undermines reality. This virtual reality takes over the real life of humans. The difference between the stages of simulacra and hyperreality is in the interactive characteristics (Baudrillard, 1999). In the simulation and simulacra phases, there is no interactivity, that is, activities that normally can be done in real life can now be done.

3. The Dilemma

These human efforts can change the character of communication and can shape a culture that becomes a belief system through the integration of text, images, and sounds (Castells, 2010). The internet network can distribute information while Instagram users construct their reality. In social media, identity becomes fluid and changing (Nasrullah, 2015, p.77). Uploading photos and videos that are 'Instagramable' allows individuals to be anyone, even away from reality.

Through an 'instagramble' discussion with Baudrillard's lens, the author argues that Instagram can turn everyone into a kind of simulacrum. Instagram is a social media that is useful for building interactions with other people. However, 'instagramable' can construct a culture of displaying

something fake. In addition, blurring the original social class has an impact on unclear status or loss of identity. When users claim falsehood, it means they have constructed other people's thoughts to always see only the best side, even though this is not necessarily true and real. 'Instagramable' obscures social class.

The author emphasizes the argument about how important this effect is on oneself and how to interpret identity through 'instagramable' photos or videos. The blurred hyperreality makes the lines of online and offline identity unidentifiable.

Conclusion

Users polish or edit photos and videos to look perfect. Photos and videos uploaded on Instagram are often called 'Instagramable'. Contents like this show the state of the collapse of reality. Instagram users take over reality by replacing it with virtual engineering which is considered more real than real reality. This shows that the awareness of something real is replaced with a pseudo-reality. This condition strengthens the formation of imagination because content creation is done many times. The signs that are formed are far from reality.

The way to uncover the reality that occurs in "instagramable" uploads, researchers observe the dramaturgy process, namely the front and backstage. Then analyze using the thinking of Jean Baudrillard. Researchers used four stages, including reflection of a profound reality, it masks and denatures a profound reality, it masks the absence of a profound reality, it has no relation to any reality whatsoever; it is its pure simulacrum. In the first stage, uploading photos and videos is still the same as the original. In the second stage, the image does not resemble the original by using a filter. The third stage, when users start using the edit feature by changing contrast, exposure, brightness, warmth, highlights, and others.

The fourth stage is when the user uses artist face filters, mask filters, and so on.

Simulacra describe photo and image simulations on Instagram. Users present "instagramable" photos and videos in unclear places where they are simulated. This is because there is a process or a series of stages to polish, change it through the features that are integrated into the application. Instagram is no longer showing reality. Instagram has become a reality itself. What's on Instagram is more real than reality itself.

Instagram reality is a simulation result. The author argues that it is difficult to state an "instagramable" photo or video at what stage of the simulation. The author argues that simulation is more than a process that becomes a simulacrum. The concept of simulation, simulation, and hyperreality from Jeab Badurillard helps us as academics to interpret that Instagram is a medium to create hyperreality. The results of this study give us insight that the "instagramable" simulation is a state of imagination that is not entirely true or not true.

References

Baudrilllard, J and Foss, P. (1983). Simulations. New York : Semiotext

Baudrillard, J. (1993, [1976]). Symbolic Exchange and Death. trans. I. H. Grant London: SAGE.

Baudrillard, J. (1999). Simulacra and simulation (Translated by Sheila Faria Glaser). Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press

Castells, Manuel. (2010). The. Rise of the Network Society. Wiley-Blackwell Publication

Creswell W. John. 2013. Research Design Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan. Mixed. Yogyakarta : Pustaka Pelajar.

Damayanti, N and Hidayat, M. Aginta. (2019). Hyperreality Of Social Media: A Phenomenology Study of Self

Confession of Housewives of Facebook Users. The Journal of Society and Media 2019, Vol. 3(2) 261-277

Goffman, Erving. 1959. The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. Doubleday Anchor: Garden City, New York

Haryatmoko (2016) "Jean Baudrillard: Masyarakat Konsumeris: Manipulasi Tanda dan Hiperrealitas", dalam Membongkar Rezim Kepastian, Pemikiran Kritis Post-Strukturalis, Yogyakarta: Kanisius

Haryono, C. Gatot. (2020). Kepalsuan Hidupdalamhiperrealitas Iklan (The

Falsehood of Life in Advertising Hyperreality). Profetik Jurnal Komunikasi

Lane, Richard J.(2000), Jean Baudrillard, New York & London: Routledge.

https://tekno.tempo.co/read/1443132/ramai-pemakai-instagram-istilah-instagramable-pun-muncul/full&view=ok

Neuman. W Lawrence. 2006. Social Research Methods Sixth Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.