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Hate Speech About Politics in Social Media

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Abstract

Indonesia is one of the largest countries that embraces a democratic system after the United States and India. As a democratic country, of course, Indonesia gives freedom of opinion in public in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 1998 concerning freedom of expression in public. Politics is one issue that steals the public's attention. Elections (Elections) are a concrete manifestation of the application of democracy in Indonesia. However, it is not uncommon in the arena of political contestation, expressions of hatred are often used by certain parties to bring down political opponents as well as attract public sympathy to win politics (detik.com, 2018). According to Cherian George, professor of media studies from the University of Hong Kong, hate spin is a deliberate attempt by hate rappers to invent or fabricate hate (which actually does not exist). The hate speech has been happening a lot in social media as a fast means of disseminating information. Furthermore, the factors that led to the rise of political hate speech, on social media are the presence of buzzers, influencers and followers. based on the Notes of a Number of Surveys released by PolMark (2018) there is an increased potential for the destruction of social harmony during the 2014-2017 democratic party. This is certainly a concern among all parties to cooperate with each other in overcoming utterances of hatred about politics for the sake of maintaining the unity of the nation and state.

Keywords: hate speech, politics, social media, democracy

1. Introduction

In 2018 the age of reform had reached 20 years or decades in Indonesia, which was the beginning of the end of the New Order regime at that time. Reform is the beginning of the return to social and political rights of all citizens, one of the main features of a democratic political system. Therefore, differences in views and interests between citizens are not castrated or shackled, but are managed in such a way that everything can be channeled in peaceful ways in accordance with democratic principles.

Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 1998 concerning freedom to express opinions in public. This law has guaranteed and protected the public to express their opinions in public which is currently being implemented through social media such as whatsapp, twitter, instagram, facebook and other social media. However, there is a negative impact on society which is spread by people who are not responsible and argue that what has been done is part of freedom of opinion in public. This is evidenced by the prevalence of hate speech such as hate speech based on politics, especially during the political year.

General Elections (*Pemilu*) are an important pillar of democracy. If during the New Order era, elections were held less or not openly, honestly and fairly (*jurdily*), and with a limited number of participants, the quality of elections during the Reformation period was much better. The 2004 election was the first fruit of reform in which the community directly elected the president, as were 560 members of the People's Representative Council (DPR) and 128 members of the Regional Representative Council (DPD) (PUSAD, 2019). Based on the Center for the Study of Religion and Democracy (PUSAD) (2019), it is stated that the electoral processes have so far been considered to be running well and peacefully. This is recognized not only by domestic election observers and observers, but also by international election monitoring organizations such as the Freedom House and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

However, the development of social media is currently a tough challenge for election managers. In June 2018, 171 *pilkada* (regional head elections) were held simultaneously, to elect mayors, regents and governors which culminated in the presidential election (*pilpres*) in April 2019. This is evidenced by the increase in cases of hate speech with political aims with the intention of bringing someone down or certain groups especially on social media. National Police Crime Investigator, Police Commissioner Ronald Sipayung said, there was a surge in cyber-crime cases from 2015 to 2019 and then during 2019, the Indonesian Police

handled 2,800 cyber cases. There are 35 percent of them are cases of hoaxes and hate speech, the majority of which are related to elections (Kompas, 2019). Then Ronald (2019) also stated that there has been an increase in cases of hate speech related to politics since 2018 (Kompas, 2019).

Minister of Communication and Informatics Rudiantara (2019) acknowledged that it is easy to spread hate speech due to the low level of literacy of Indonesian society (VOA Indonesia, 2018). In addition, this hate speech is also due to the growing development of social media as a means of communication for the digital age. The means of communication on social media take place publicly. The openness of media or information disclosure on social media triggers the high tendency of the public to make hate speech, such as the availability of comment facilities for readers on electronic-based media. This causes the relationship between the writer and the reader to be reciprocal, able, and easy to comment on each other (Junita et al, 2018). Even though hate speech is contrary to the concept of language politeness as an indicator of linguistic intelligence which is in accordance with the ethics of communication. Then the ethics of communication is one of the characteristics of the Indonesian nation as a legacy of the Indonesian nation. Ethics is awareness and knowledge of good and bad behavior or actions taken by humans (Ministry of Trade, 2014).

However, the ethics of netizens (active users of social media) in speaking when they think on social media shows that there is a decline in communication ethics in Indonesian society. The absence of a filter or filter for consideration of good and bad values is the beginning of the disaster of social media abuse in the digital era (Junita, 2018).

Therefore, in this article the author will discuss hate speech about politics on social media as a means of expressing opinions in the digital era.

2. Discussion

2.1. *The Meaning of Hate Speech*

This research used descriptive qualitative method. This study used lexical semantics (verbal communication such as sounds, words, language and speech) in visual media. This research method used qualitative by describing the data. Data collection was obtained from social media and decisions of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia. Researchers will observe every word and sentence used by Ahmad Dhani. Data was taken from tweet Ahmad Dhani and the Decision of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia. After recording the data using semantic lexicals, the researchers proceed to the forensic linguistics of the investigation process to reveal the honesty of the parties examined in the investigation process, such as suspects and witnesses, considering that it is possible that witnesses also speak dishonestly during the investigation process. In analyzing a text that is suspected of containing hate speech, a linguist is required not only to consider what he "reads and hears" but also considers the appropriate context and approach or theory to analyze it. As stated by Coulthard and Johnson (2007: 14), in the forensic linguistic approach, the precautionary principle must be maintained so that the resulting analysis can be proportional and relevant to the case.

According to Greenswalt, Kent, quoted in Berita Bayangkara (2017), states that hate speech is an insult and a nickname for race, religion, ethnicity, or certain sexual references that can cause serious problems for democratic theory and practice. This is because in democratic practice there is individual freedom in expressing opinions in public places.

Society in general agrees that there is no universal, firm and black and white agreement regarding the meaning of hate speech. This is partly due to disagreements about what action can be taken against hate speech. If something is considered hate speech, then it can be dealt with. If not, then he is allowed. The definition used will have implications for what actions can be taken (PUSAD, 2019).

However, hate speech can simply be understood as an act of incitement against other people to hate certain parties by exploiting identity sentiments, such as religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, political ideology, and similar variables. In the arena of political contestation, hate speech is often used by certain parties to bring down political opponents as well as attract public sympathy to win politics (detik.com, 2018).

Walters et. al. (2006), researchers from the University of Sussex, state that the main factor causing hate speech is prejudice against certain people or groups. This prejudice is formed from continuous socialization and internalization by family, school, friends, or people around hate speech makers (Tirto.id, 2017).

Based on the National Human Rights Commission (2019) quoted from PUSAD (2019), it is stated that the broader definition of hate speech is summarized in several elements, namely: (1) All forms of communication, both direct and indirect; (2) Based on hatred on the basis of ethnicity, religion, belief, race, color, ethnicity and other identities; (3) Intended as incitement against individuals or groups of discrimination, violence, loss of life and social conflicts; (4) It is carried out through various means.

Hate speech is one of the impacts of the implementation of democracy in which rules have been established that can overcome hate speech itself. These rules are contained in several laws, namely: (1) Article 156 KUHP; (2) Article 310 of the Criminal Code;

(3) Article 311 of the Criminal Code; (4) Law no.11 TH 2008 concerning electronic information and transactions: Article 28 JIS; (5) Article 45 paragraph 2; (6) Law 40 TH 2008 Article 16 concerning the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Even so, in reality hate speech continues to increase. This is in accordance with the results of Amnesty International's annual report on the human rights situation in the world which states that 2017 is designated as a year full of hate issues. The development of hate speech has also occurred in Indonesia where there is hate rhetoric that is used for the purpose of electoral contestation (Kompas, 2018).

Hate speech is not only in the form of outright provocation, but sometimes also uses hoaxes. Hoaxes are engineered information, either by distorting facts or obscuring information, so that the correct message cannot be received by someone (PUSAD, 2019).

2.2. Hate Speech related to Politics

According to the Indonesian Anti-Defamation Society (Mafindo) quoted in PUSAD (2019) the frequency of hoaxes related to political issues was in the first rank of 40.90% which occurred throughout December 2018. The frequency of hoaxes was related to hate speech related to politics. It is not uncommon that political hoaxes contain SARA issues and vice versa SARA issues are linked to political issues. Then political hoaxes with the nuances of SARA contain utterances that often fabricate offense. Furthermore, it is known as hate spinning. According to Chierian George, a professor of media studies at the University of Hong Kong hate spin is a deliberate attempt by hate-motivators to fabricate or fabricate hate (which doesn't exist). According to Chierian George, there are many cases of hate spin that have occurred in the three largest democracies in the world, namely the United States, India, and Indonesia, where the spin of hatred has been a political strategy (PUSAD, 2019).

According to the Executive Director of Amnesty International Indonesia Usman Hamid, the phenomenon of the relationship between the issue of hatred and politics is a global phenomenon. An example is Donald Trump's victory in the 2016 US Presidential Election. Trump's political strategy was adopted in various countries by spreading hate issues with various targets. In this strategy, it appears that the politics of hatred which the leader's rhetoric are quite effective in electoral contestation (Kompas, 2018).

The rise of hate speech on the political stage has actually occurred during the 2014 Presidential Election (Pilpres). The presidential election, which was only followed by two pairs of candidates, made the competition filled with various political maneuvers and intrigues. The campaign arena is filled with agitation and opinions that lead to black campaigns, rather than discourse and ideological battles (Detik.com, 2018).

The hate speech was further exacerbated by the existence of 16 thousand hate speech in the 2017 DKI Jakarta Regional Head Election where slander. The hate speech aims to bring down the electability of political opponents (CNN, 2018). The political battle that occurred in the 2017 regional elections was clad in identity sentiment with currents of Islamic conservatism-populism so that the DKI Pilkada was listed as the most brutal regional election in the history of post-reform Indonesian democracy (Detik.com, 2018).

However, the hate speech actually decreased in 2018 compared to the previous year. This is in accordance with Samuel's statement, Director General of Informatics Applications (*Aptika*) of the Ministry of Communication and Informatics (*Kominfo*), saying that the decrease in slander and hate speech indicates two things, namely: (1) society is getting more literate; (2) the issue of hate speech and slander is no longer an issue that can be used to bring down the votes of political opponents (CNN, 2018).

Even though there was a decrease in hate speech related to politics in 2018, Indonesia as one of the largest countries that adhere to a democratic system continues to monitor hate speech with the existence of the Election Supervisory Body (*Bawaslu*) and the General Election Commission (KPU) which will determine the contents of violations regarding hate speech. Meanwhile, *Kominfo* acts as executor to block or take down the content.

Eric Heinze in his book *Hate Speech and Democratic Citizenship* (2016) quoted in detik.com (2018) states that the rampant hate speech in political contestations in a number of countries in a number of decades is due to several factors, namely: (1) There is a sense of dominance in the form of prejudice. one group of people against another. Bad prejudice usually starts from the habit of people who like to identify a group with a certain labeling (stereotype). This labeling is the beginning of the emergence of hate speech. This situation can be used by political elites in gaining public sympathy so that later they will get votes; (2) There is an inferior attitude that feels that they will be excluded from the public's attention. This inferiority often leads to an attitude of feeling threatened over the existence of groups that dominate social space. In this context, hate speech is more of a form of strategy to delegitimize groups that are currently dominant in social space.

2.3. Hate Speech related to Politics in Social Media

Based on the results of Wearesocial Hootsuite's research released in January 2019, social media users in Indonesia reached 150 million or 56% of the total population, while mobile social media (gadget) users reached 130 million or around 48% of the population (Katadata, 2019).

This data shows that the high use of social media as a means of communicating and expressing opinions.

There are several cases of hate speech with political nuances against state officials on social media. For example, Ropi Yatsman (36) edited photos of a number of officials, including former DKI Jakarta Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama alias Ahok in 2017 and was sentenced to 15 months in prison. Furthermore, Ahmad Dhani was also reported on charges of violating Article 28 Paragraph (2) and Article 45 Paragraph (2) of Law Number 19 Year 2016 concerning ITE for twittering using the @ahmaddhaniprast account whose tone was deemed inciting and full of hatred towards Ahok's supporters (Kompas.com, 2017).

The 2017 DKI Jakarta gubernatorial election noted that there was the most spread of hate speech in the comments room of online media readers. Even until the elections passed, the practice of hate speech still continued (the conversation, 2018).

There are several factors in the rampant political nuances of hate speech on social media, namely the presence of buzzers, influencers and followers. In the context of the campaign, the buzzer acts as a brain that shapes a particular discourse. Influencers are influencers in cyberspace who are marked by the large number of followers of their social media accounts. These buzzer groups are usually organic and integrated into the success team of candidate pairs, they can also be party cadres. Then, the buzzers of each candidate overthrew and vilified the other candidate's pair (including attacking with hate speech in various forms). On the other hand, the buzzers will defend the candidate pair they support (the conversation, 2018).

As quoted on the conversation page (2018) which states that hate speech is easily spread on social media, because social media makes it easy for users to access all forms of information quickly through online news and social media. This is because social media has several characteristics, namely: (1) not centralized (decentralized); (2) two-way communication; (3) out of control, democratic, (4) raises individual awareness; (5) and oriented towards individual awareness.

Furthermore, this speech that mingles with politics also easily influences society because public awareness of the importance of politics is getting higher. So that there are many parties who pay more attention to the politics that is happening and are quick to respond to certain things, including comments given on social media in the form of hate speech mixed with politics.

2.4. Solutions in overcoming Hate Speech about Politics in Social Media

Hate speech about politics is one of the communication crimes in bringing down opponents to gain public sympathy. This clearly violates the character of the Indonesian nation, which is known for its politeness in speaking the language. However, the development of social media as a means of communication widely and quickly has caused several things that are quite difficult to prevent, one of which is hate speech about politics. As a country that upholds the principles of democracy, Indonesia has regulated the rights of every citizen, including the freedom to express opinions in public. However, this freedom will be limited if the rights that are exercised have a negative impact on oneself, others, and society in general. This is clearly stated in the ITE Law.

Therefore, it takes the role of society in stemming the utterances of hatred so as to prevent divisions in society. Because based on the records of a number of surveys released by PolMark, there is an increase in the potential for damage to social harmony during the 2014-2017 democratic party. The portrait of the increase was obtained from the results of PolMark's survey during the 2014 presidential election and the 2017 DKI Jakarta elections. Based on the 2014 presidential election survey, 95.2 percent of voters admitted that their friendship was not damaged after the election at that time. Meanwhile, in the 2017 survey, 93.8 percent of respondents mentioned the same thing (Tirto.id, 2018).

3. Conclusion

Hate speech can simply be understood as an act of incitement against other people to hate certain parties by exploiting identity sentiments, such as religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, political ideology, and similar variables. In the arena of political contestation, hate speech is often used by certain parties to bring down political opponents as well as attract public sympathy to win politics (detik.com, 2018). Thus, there are several factors in the rampant hate speech with political nuances, on social media, namely the presence of buzzers, influencers and followers. In the context of the campaign, the buzzer acts as a brain that shapes a particular discourse. Influencers are influencers in cyberspace who are marked by the large number of followers of their social media accounts. These buzzer groups are usually organic and integrated into the success team of candidate pairs, they can also be

party cadres. then, the buzzers of each candidate overthrew and vilified the other candidate's pair (including attacking with hate speech in various forms). On the other hand, the buzzers will defend the candidate pair they support (the conversation, 2018).

Therefore, in overcoming hate speech, it requires cooperation between community groups, political parties, and the government in overcoming hate speech about politics so that it can still maintain democratic values that do not cause division between the nation. This is because as a large nation, Indonesia must still be able to maintain the unity of the nation and state in order to achieve the ideals of the Indonesian nation as stated in the 1945 Constitution.

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