

Scrutinizing deceptions in fake news within French alternative news media using forensic linguistics

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Abstract: Linguistic instruments together with informatics tools can be used to detect fake news narratives, which are sometimes increasingly difficult to be distinguished from true news. This study aims at designing the stages of detection of lies in the fake news discourse found in French alternative media using linguistic features. Applying a forensic linguistic perspective, this study used data survey from the francophone media consumers in Indonesia and articles originated from three different French alternative news media platforms that were identified as fake news by checking through fake news verification sites available on several investigator media platforms. These three articles were classified and analyzed using intertextuality and interdiscursivity methods within the forensic linguistic concepts. Critical perspective was used as the conceptual framework throughout this research. The results of the analysis show that 14.3% of respondents are not able to identify fake news in the media they consumed. The linguistic features within 254 sentences contained deceptions filtered from three medias tend to use lexical morpheme components and syntactic patterns that provoke emotions and empathy in readers. Furthermore, sentence structures are frequently found in passive patterns and use impersonal subjects as markers to a fewer references and cognitive complexity.

Keywords: *Digital media, fake news, forensic linguistic, French, lie detection*



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INTRODUCTION

Deceptions or lies are a phenomenon based on linguistic features, and can be expressed either verbally or in writing. A lie is “(1) *to make a statement that one believes to be false, with the intention that the other person believes that statement to be true.* (2) *to make a believed-false statement (to another person), either with the intention that that statement be believed to be true (by the other person), or with the intention that it be believed (by the other person) that that statement is believed to be true (by the person making the statement), or with both intentions.*” (Mahon, 2008, 2019). An act of writing can be utilized to express a lie in a variety of ways, both structurally and non-structurally, by employing a range of linguistic features. McDonald et al.’s (2020) research, conducted in the field of psycholinguistics, posits that the cognitive process of lying results in protracted reaction times and diminished language articulation. This condition has been shown to result in an increase in cognitive processing for individuals who are dishonest, thereby affecting the fluency and coherence of their language production. In a similar vein, research conducted by Gullberg et al. (2024) demonstrates that written lies are characterized by extended pauses, frequent revisions, and a greater number of rephrased sentences. This further emphasizes how increased cognitive

load for lying will impact fluency and revision frequency in both spoken and written language. The application of forensic linguistics principles facilitates the identification of such linguistic behavior.

In 2023, Loconte et al. (2023) also conducted an investigation into the use of written language as a medium for deceit, comparing lie detection techniques that employ both machine and human capabilities. The findings indicate that false narratives frequently exhibit a lack of coherence and manifest specific linguistic characteristics and a notable cognitive burden. This finding aligns with the Four Factors Theory of Lying proposed by Zuckerman et al. (1981), which posits that dishonesty leads to an increase in cognitive effort, thereby affecting fluency. Individuals who fabricate information will be required to exert additional cognitive efforts to recall their statements when discussing a topic that is not in alignment with reality.

Language analysis to detect lies is usually used to analyze spoken language, which involves also facial expressions, eye movements, and gestures (Seron, 2019). All of these components can help analyze lies in verbal interactions. What about written discourse in the form of text: how to detect the lies contained in it, especially fake news discourses that are widely circulated in digital media, is under-explored. Research on this matter has not been widely carried out in the field of linguistic studies (D'Andrea, 2025). The linguistic analyses used to examine fake news as shown in several journals still focus on identifying the status of a text as fake news using the help of informatics devices. Mahyoob et al. (2020), for instance, compared 20 texts from fake news politi-fact verification sites with fake news texts found randomly through social media, especially Facebook. This research focuses more on the comparison of the components of the texts between the two sources, which turns out to be less significant quantitatively. The texts from both fake news and text verification have high numbers for three linguistic features: reported speech, passive voice, and negation. The qualitative and quantitative mix-method applied by Mahyoob et al. (2020) is able to provide numbers that visualize the dominant components in the text data analyzed. However, the portion given to the quantitative aspect is too large, so there is no room for an explanation of qualitative data analysis. Additionally, there is also a thesis research from Francis (2018) which also examines linguistically the phenomenon of fake news and the tendency to lie.

Most of developed research in detecting fake news were in the domain of computational study (Bezzaoui, 2024; Shaik, 2023; Yakkundi, 2024). A study conducted on fake news in French recently (Andriani, 2022) has explored how this fake news reproduces and distributes on social media, resulting in certain movements in French society. Although there have been many media literacy efforts through verifier journalism on various social media and television platforms, there are still many found through research data, community groups who are affected by fake news, especially related

to the Covid-19 vaccine polemic in France. To this day, there are still many anti-vaccine protests and demonstrations in several cities in France. Likewise with digital media, there are still lots of fake news circulating, and it is clearly difficult to distinguish which ones are fake news and which ones are not.

The utilization of forensic linguistic tools in the analysis of a statement can yield insights into the construction of a narrative, as opposed to a mere examination of its verbal or written components (Sousa-Silva, 2023; Zulfie et al., 2023). Sousa-Silva (2022) argues that linguistic features offer a more comprehensive set of indicators for detecting deception than mere factual inaccuracies. This assertion is particularly salient in instances where falsehoods emanate from bias, partiality, or manipulation. Sousa-Silva's (2019) forensic linguistic research on fake news texts in English and Portuguese identified patterns of orthography and typography, spelling anomalies, and morphosyntactic structures. The application of the forensic linguistic approach has the potential to enhance the efficacy of automatic fake news detection models. Furthermore, it can serve as a reference for legal proceedings, criminal investigations, and forensic media analysis.

These empirical facts and academia literature show that there are still many aspects related to lie detection and fake news phenomenon (Tsapro, 2023), to a large extent linguistically, that have not been comprehensively revealed. Especially from the consumption side, how did the series of fake news discourses reach the public and be consumed? How consumers can identify a correct discourse in the midst of being surrounded by fake news circulating? How to identify a lie in the discourses found in various digital media around us with linguistic instruments? Based on these problems, questions that are raised through this current study include: (1) What strategies are used by consumers of French digital media in Indonesia to identify a lie in a fake news discourse? (2) How to detect deceptions in a discourse contained in online alternative media platform using French linguistic instruments?

METHOD

The current research uses a qualitative-dominant mixed approach with a post-structural paradigm, especially a critical perspective. The theories used a multidisciplinary view in nature from the fields of critical sociolinguistics, forensic linguistics, communication science, and psychology. Primary data were obtained through several digital media whose relevance was justified first, and secondary data were gained from in-depth interviews, FGDs, and detector trials with several research subjects who consume fake news discourse in French in Indonesia.

This research was carried out in several stages: (1) Primary and secondary steps of data collection, (2) Data analysis, (3) Data validity test and deceptions detector, (4) Data analysis interpretation and test results, and (5) Data

presentation. At the initial stage, primary data collection was carried out by first identifying the digital media that would be used as the source of the corpus. The media discourse selected from this digital media would be verified first by using a media verifier provided by the French government. This was done to confirm the fake news discourse that would be studied. The online media which had been identified as publishing fake news articles are three alternative media outlets: France Reinfo, Le Courrier des Stratèges, and France-Soir. A widely discussed fake news articles that became national issues in France were selected from each of the three media outlets. The veracity of the purported news was confirmed and validated through a process of verification in mainstream media sources, including www.20minutes.fr/dossier/fake, www.factuel.afp.com, www.lefigaro.fr/tag/fake-news, and www.france24.com/fr/tag/fake-news.

After the three fake news articles from the digital media were identified and selected, the secondary step data collection was taken, namely interviews with consumers about the fake news discourse in Indonesia. The subjects of this research were selected according to the intensity of the discourse consumption. Fake news discourse in French is consumed by French speakers, who make up the majority of French people living in Indonesia. According to data information from the French Consulate in Indonesia, a significant number of French communities reside in Bali, Yogyakarta, and Jakarta. Each city has a different profile of the French community. For example, in Jakarta the community is dominated by professionals who are representatives of French companies in Indonesia, or institutions such as embassies, with around 400 families. Meanwhile, in Yogyakarta and Central Java, there are 200 families, most of whom are retirees or small-scale entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, Bali is a dream city for French community, so there are more than 600 French families living and working remotely from there. The respondents were selected through purposive sampling. They have experienced in finding fake news within the French media. Therefore, in the second stage of data collection, interviews and Focus Group Discussion were conducted with research subjects who domicile in Jakarta and Yogyakarta. During the research visits to Jakarta, in addition to interviews, we researchers also consulted the database center of the French Embassy, particularly the media and audio-visual divisions, to obtain additional data and fake news verifiers there.

In the final stage of data analysis, intertextuality and interdiscursivity perspectives were used in examining the relationships formed between all discourses, the results of interviews with discourse consumers, and testing deceits detector on research subjects. It was continued with interpreting the data (Artanti, 2023) gathered by the previous method. Analysis of lies using linguistic tools is a relatively new practice using a forensic linguistic perspective (Coulthard et al., 2020). The majority of the analysis of lies carried out is related to the court process in reviewing evidence in the form of texts,

as well as testimony at trial.

Several theories of lie analysis in French was also used along with this post-structuralism/post-modernism paradigm, in order to shape the understanding of a lie concept and then looking to it in a fake news. A theory proposed by Goulard, who has experience as an intelligence agency agent, was used as a reference to detect lies based on 12 strategies (Goulard, 2013). Another one is Méry's (2014) theory, which offers analytical techniques as well as identification of the types of lies and possible ways to deal with them. Meibauer (2019) wrote the history of the tradition of lies, and important concepts related to this phenomenon in society. All the fake news linguistic features corpus data were classified according to the three language dimensions associated with lies from Newman et al. (2023), which are (i) fewer self-references (and references), (ii) more negative emotion words, (iii) fewer markers of cognitive complexity.

This study was conducted at the end of the 2022 Covid pandemic with a limited population of respondents and limited access to the media. Consequently, the study focused solely on French speakers in two cities in Indonesia and three French alternative media outlets that published fake news between January 2022 and January 2023.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This research was carried out through an administration of questionnaires and interviews with a total of 21 individuals residing in Jakarta and Yogyakarta. The results of the study indicated that 14.3% of the participants were still unable to distinguish between authentic and fabricated news. Following statistical data are derived from the distribution of questionnaires to 21 respondents who consume French digital media in Indonesia, answering the question; "Do you know how to identify a fake news within medias or social medias?":

Savez-vous identifier une fausse nouvelle sur les medias ou les réseaux sociaux?
21 responses

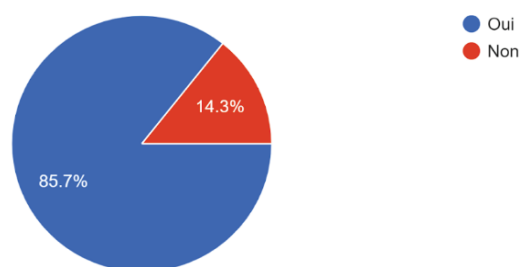


Figure 1. Ability to identify fake news in social media among French speakers in Indonesia.

The majority of respondents who stated that they could identify fake news on digital news platforms relied on search engines to help confirm fake news through verification sites provided by major French media outlets. The survey results in Figure 2 also demonstrate that the media most widely used by the Francophone public in Indonesia is social media (71.4%) and online media portals (57.1%). A subsequent investigation has revealed that social media platforms, which are utilized for the purpose of accessing the latest news, contain links to news articles that have been published on a variety of online media portals. Consequently, it can be deduced that the primary source of news accessed by the Francophone public is online media portals. This phenomenon can be attributed to the dearth of French-language newspapers and magazines in Indonesia.

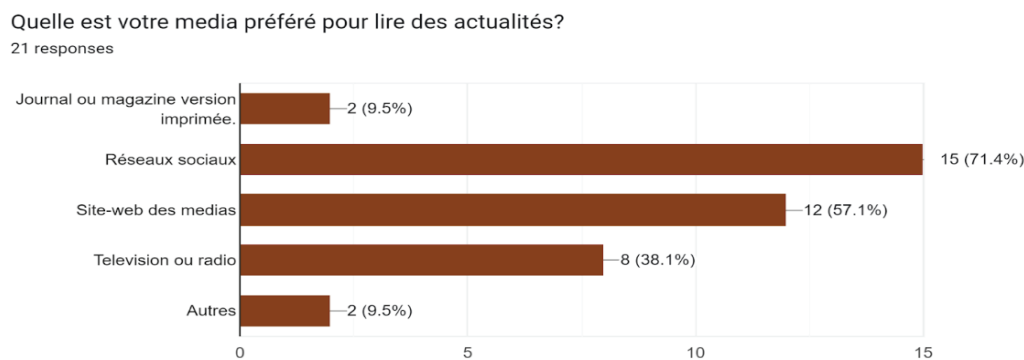


Figure 2. Types of media consumed by the French speakers population in Indonesia.

In the subsequent discussion section, respondents proffered numerous exemplifications of disinformation they had encountered during the consumption of information via social media and online news portals. Among them, we analyzed three articles as data using Newman's dimensions of languages in deception categories that can be seen in following Table 1:

Table 1. The three-dimensional classification of language associated with deceit

Media	Title of article	Number of phrases	Fewer or no references or self-references	More negative emotion words	Fewer markers of cognitive complexity
Presse France Réinfo (PFR) 9 juillet 2022	<i>Le complot mondialiste devant vos yeux, au grand jour</i>	105	49	35	30
Le Courrier des Stratèges (LCDS) 22 fév 2022	<i>Agenda du chaos : comment Big Pharma a industrialisé le "narratif" de la protection parle vaccin</i>	287	92	132	31
FranceSoir (FS) 16 janvier 2023	<i>Covid, vaccin et contraception féminine: les risques exacerbés de thromboses liés à la pilule oestro-progestative</i>	83	15	9	6
Total		475	156	176	67

Discussion

News Consumption Practice among Francophone Community in Indonesia

Adequate and reliable Fake News detection has not been found yet. The majority of detections using information technology tools rely on algorithms, involvement in digital interactions and political identity (Balakrishnan V, 2023). Sousa (2022) discusses forensic linguistic detection on fake news collected in Portuguese and English since 2019 through several well-known fake news outlets. Preliminary research shows that fake news often uses certain linguistic features at the level of typography, orthography, spelling and morphosyntactic. To study written or spoken texts as part of a criminal investigation, forensic linguistic analysis is a type of investigative technique. In order to pinpoint the distinguishing qualities of a certain author or set of authors, this method entails analyzing language, syntax, word choice, grammatical structures, and subtleties of meaning. The identi-

ty, location, age, gender, level of education, and even the author's emotional condition can be ascertained by forensic linguistic analysts by looking into texts such as letters, emails, text messages, handwritten notes, or voice recordings. To identify participants and their position in a crime, this technique can also be used to examine recorded conversations, phone calls, or internet messaging. Investigators can utilize linguistic data to support or contradict testimony, create a timeline of events, or other purposes by employing linguistic analysis techniques.

However, it should be noted that not all individuals who consume news on digital platforms are aware of these linguistic strategies for identifying fake news. This present study was conducted to ascertain the level of understanding among a Francophone community in Indonesia of the distinction between factual and fictitious news. French-speaking population in Indonesia is comprised of individuals from various Francophone countries, in addition to those Indonesians who possess a various level of proficiency in French. In accessing French-language informations, the French Cultural Centre's library is the primary limited resource available to users. However, the internet and social media have become the mainstays of this access. The majority of media outlets utilise social media as a conduit to attract readers to news sites. A similar phenomenon is also observable in the proliferation of alternative media platforms, which have emerged in tandem with the era of information openness. This shift has engendered a public demand for alternative perspectives on a news or events, beyond those offered by mainstream news sources. Nevertheless, the highly competitive and fast-paced nature of the online media business frequently results in certain media outlets failing to adhere to proper journalistic principles. Consequently, there has been a proliferation of fake news, disinformation, and sensationalist headlines designed to attract clicks, known as clickbait. As demonstrated in following Figure 3, on 18 April 2022 the BBC News Twitter account, a mainstream media outlet, disseminated a fake news.



Figure 3. Fake news found on the social media using link to the digital media platform

The fake news post was distributed on the social media platform X quoted President Macron as saying: “Europe will have to accept up to 60 million refugees from Africa and the Middle East over the next 20 years because sanctions against Russia will cause economic collapse in Africa, which imports huge quantities of Russian wheat.” In addition the post under discussion also included an image of Macron, which was published on the X account and the BBC News website in English. This misinformation was disseminated rapidly, causing grave concern in Europe concurrent with Russia’s incursion into Ukraine. The prevailing economic uncertainty, precipitated by the war situation, has engendered widespread fear among the general public, who, in an attempt to anticipate potential adverse scenarios, have become reliant on constant information sources. Media proprietors capitalised on this environment by competing to provide the most recent and rapid information, frequently disregarding the principles of verification that should be applied in journalism. Indeed, in an effort to address the dissemination of misinformation, the French government, in collaboration with UNESCO and the Global Journalism Network Association, has established a journalistic investigation mechanism known as *Journalisme de Vérification* (<https://www.reseau-canope.fr/developper-lesprit-critique/le-journalisme-de-verification>). A concrete example of this phenomenon can be observed in the increasing prevalence of fact-checking columns in various news portals. These columns are designed to verify the accuracy of news stories, whether in print, audio-visual or television media. The veracity of the aforementioned BBC News story can be ascertained by tracing its accuracy on a media verification platform, France 24, such as the one in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Verification text on a verifcator website

Verification media platforms provide clear explanations and visually mark news identified as fake news with labels in French such as ‘*intox*’ or ‘*infox*’, which mean fakenews. However, these platforms have not yet become a reflexive go-to for news consumers when encountering fake news. Indeed, with the advancement of artificial intelligence technology, it has become increasingly common for readers to access news that has been determined to be misinformation, without knowing it. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for these verification media outlets to be exploited to conversely disseminate fake news on a larger scale (<https://theconversation.com/fact-check-trois-infox-sur-les-infox-136809>).

Three-Dimensional Classification of Language Associated with Deceits

A close analysis of data articles confirmed as fake news reveals firstly a clear tendency for sentences or statements lacking adequate references. Despite the presence of a limited number of references, these are often found to be incomplete. It is notable that there are no direct references from the sources or figures discussed or mentioned by name. For example in one of the articles, the name Bill Gates is cited, yet there is an absence of interviews or direct quotations from him, as evidenced by the following excerpt data (01):

Data (01): « *Peut-être parce que, pendant la décennie 2010, Bill Gates a fourni l’effort d’influence qui manquait pour structurer mondialement la stratégie du «tout-vaccinal» ? ... Autrement dit, après la crise du H1N1 où les Etats-nations sont parvenus à bloquer l’OMS dans son intention de déclarer l’état de pandémie mondiale, et donc de prendre le contrôle des politiques sanitaires nationales, Bill Gates a décidé qu’on ne l’y prendrait plus. Il a massivement investi dans l’influence politique, faisant feu de tout bois pour parvenir à ses fins.* » (02-LCDS-22 fév. 2022)

The news excerpt details Bill Gates’ sustained endeavors to promote vaccines across diverse regions of the world, facilitated through the auspices of the World Health Organization (WHO). The following is the complete translation of the aforementioned news excerpt:

“Perhaps because, during the 2010s, Bill Gates provided the influence that was lacking to structure the global “all-vaccine” strategy? ... In other words, after the H1N1 crisis, when nation states managed to block the WHO’s intention to declare a global pandemic and thus take control of national health policies, Bill Gates decided that he would not be caught out again. He invested heavily in political influence, pulling out all the stops to achieve his goals.”

It is evident that the assertions presented in this article, which are intended to be factual, lack the requisite clear references or sources of information. Such statements have become the subject of controversy and are perceived as negative accusations. This article adopts an anti-vaccine

stance, aligning with the perspectives of groups in France that have become a major social movement in opposition to vaccines during the period of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Secondly, the most common trend identified in the data analysis was the dimension of diction or lexical components that contained negative and frightening emotions. Examples include vaccine side effects such as “strokes”, “heart disorders”, “pathologies that cause disorders”, and “controlling respect”, which evoke a sense of dread and trepidation. It is evident that the aforementioned statements were formulated in the absence of any substantiating evidence or references to cases that have been officially documented by the pertinent agencies. Furthermore, several lexical components were identified as indirectly evoking negative emotions and feelings of insecurity. Examples can be found in the following data (02):

Data 02: « Une des principales **complications** du Sars-CoV-2 ou des maladies Covid-19, ou d'un **effet indésirable** induit par la vaccination, est une **pathologie** qui provoque une activation de la **coagulation sanguine** par la production de la fibrine **en excès**. ... Cependant, l'infection **ne semble pas être la seule cause** de ces événements thrombotiques ; depuis le commencement de la vaccination en population générale, des cas de **thromboses veineuses et artérielles** existent chez les patients **vaccinés avec tous les vaccins**, qu'ils soient à vecteur adénovirus (AstraZeneca, Janssen) ou à ARN messager (Comirnaty de Pfizer/BioNTech ou Spikevax de Moderna). » (03 – FS – 16 janv 2023)

Following is the complete translation of data (02): “One of the main **complications** of SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19 disease, or an **adverse effect induced by vaccination**, is a condition that causes **blood clotting** through the production of **excess** fibrin. However, infection **does not appear to be the only cause** of these thrombotic events; since the start of vaccination in the general population, cases of **venous and arterial thrombosis** have been reported in **patients vaccinated with all vaccines**, whether adenovirus-based (AstraZeneca, Janssen) or messenger RNA-based (Comirnaty from Pfizer/BioNTech or Spikevax from Moderna).” As demonstrated in the example paragraph of this article, lexical components originating from medical scientific diction can be observed, such as those printed in bold: *complication, effet indésirable, pathologie, coagulation sanguine, en excès*, etc. Nevertheless, during a pandemic, such terminology can engender adverse emotions such as anxiety and fear, amidst prevailing uncertainty regarding the general public health situation. The public’s limited awareness of the dissemination and potential hazards associated with such information often results in the acceptance of scientific terminology without critical evaluation.

In addition to the aforementioned negative emotions related to health, the analysed dataset also contained diction that indirectly provoked and caused negative feelings or feelings of insecurity and threat related to glob-

al political conspiracies. The following are illustrative examples of data from fictitious news articles pertaining to this issue:

Data (03): « Une volonté existe de créer une **gouvernance globale** dont l'avènement sera facilité par la formation de grandes zones où des Etats souverains **cèderont leurs prérogatives nationales** à des organismes “régionaux” telle l'Union européenne. ... **Leur dénominateur commun sont ces accords de libre-échange de plus en plus étendus** dans l'espace et qui vont de pair avec la création de nouvelles bureaucraties **supranationales**, et surtout, de **cours de justice chargés de contrôler le respect de leurs dispositions par leurs signataires**. » (01 - (PFR) - 9 juillet 2022)

Translation of the excerpt in Data (03) is as follows:

“There is a desire to create **global governance**, which will be facilitated by the formation of large areas where sovereign states **will cede** their **national prerogatives** to ‘regional’ bodies such as the European Union. ... Their common denominator is these **free trade** agreements, which are becoming **increasingly widespread** and go hand in hand with the creation of new **supranational** bureaucracies and, above all, courts of justice responsible for ensuring that signatories **comply with** their provisions.”

This statement is unquestionably menacing and evokes a range of adverse emotions, as it pertains to the spectre of relinquishing national sovereignty. The uncertainty engendered by the consequences of global governance controlled by a single entity and control over the compliance of the territories under it can engender global anxiety. One of the characteristics of fake news that can be found in various domains of fake news, not only politics, but also economics, health, security, food, and so on, is the threatening and fear-inducing nature of the text. From a linguistic perspective, the presence of fake news can be identified not only through the selection of vocabulary that evokes negative emotions, but also through the choice of lexical items that showing fewer of cognitive markers and complex sentences.

The third classification group consists of a minimal number of complex cognitive markers, which can be observed in the infrequent use of conjunctions or connectives, both logical and chronological, in written news narratives. In the three articles analysed, no logical connectors were found that indicate cognitive markers as would be expected in a comprehensive text in French. This phenomenon is evident in the following data (04) and (05):

Data (04): **Mais** l'idée ne devait pas prendre aussi rapidement que l'auraient souhaité ces représentants de “l'Etat profond”. **Translation:** « But the idea did not catch on as quickly as the representatives of the ‘deep state’ would have liked. (13 - (PFR) - 9 juillet 2022).

Data (05) : *Et c'est en effet ce qui s'est déroulé sous nos yeux depuis lors, non sans les guerres et menaces de guerre qui faisaient parti de la stratégie recommandée par le rapport Bloomfield.* **Translation:** « And this is indeed what has unfolded before our eyes since then, not without the wars and threats of war that were part of the strategy recommended by the Bloomfield report. (16 - (PFR) - 9 juillet 2022).

Preceding data sets illustrate the two most prevalent conjunction markers identified in the three French-language fake news articles examined, namely the words '*mais*' and '*et*', which translate to 'but' and 'and', respectively. It is important to note that both conjunctions are placed at the beginning of sentences, which is not always acceptable in French morphosyntax, especially for the conjunction 'and'. In the context of written French, the employment of *connecteurs logiques* or logical conjunctions is a fundamental component of the language's grammatical structure, a requirement that is widely regarded as a standard in the realm of written communication within society. The absence of these *connecteurs* or conjunctions may be indicative of substandard text quality and unreliable information. In the process of identifying fake news, this linguistic feature category can be used as one of the indicators, in addition to conjugation errors and other grammatical errors, as seen in data (03). Sentence '*Leur dénominateur commun sont ces accords de libre-échange...*' contains a conjugation error of the verb "*être*" for the third person singular subject '*Leur dénominateur*', which should be "*est*" instead of '*sont*', which is the conjugation for the third person plural. Such an error would be an indication of the quality of a text considered unreliable in French, and would also call into question the veracity of the information delivered.

CONCLUSION

Upon a close examination of deceit in fake news found in French alternative media has revealed a variety of linguistic features used to create fear in society. It is evident that the media continues to function as the primary source of information for the general public, both in terms of local events and global developments. The majority of French-speaking respondents in Indonesia consume news discourse via digital platforms, namely social media and digital media. Surveys of respondents revealed that 90.5% had encountered fake news on these two platforms, and 85.7% of them were able to detect such content. This figure is indicative of the respondents' literacy capacity, which is notable given that the majority of respondents are educated. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of the population, constituting 14.3% of the sample, have attained a high level of education yet have not been able to identify fake news consumed in the alternative media. These observations may be further expanded upon, given that alternative media outlets frequently exhibit a dearth of a journalism ethic that is widely recognised and respected within their respective industries.

With regard to the anatomy of news texts, a news reader or consumer needs to pay close attention to bombastic titles, unclear sources, and writing that is riddled with spelling and grammatical errors. Taken together it can serve as indicators of fake news or deceptions within a text. In addition, indicators in the perspective of morpho-syntax include the extensive utilisation of negative emotional vocabulary and the presence of fewer logical conjunctions in sentences and paragraphs. Lack of these features can be considered as markers of fake news. Furthermore, the absence of references or information sources should serve as a cautionary indicator for the reader regarding the reliability of the information presented in the news.

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