

**FIGHTING AGAINST HOAX IN MITCH ALBOM'S *THE
FIRST PHONE CALL FROM HEAVEN* (2013): A
SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**



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Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas tentang sebuah hoax atau sebuah kebohongan yaitu kebohongan sebuah panggilan telepon yang berasal dari surga di dalam novel karya Mitch Albom yang berjudul *The First Phone Call From Heaven 2013* dengan menggunakan pendekatan Sosiologi. Tujuan dari studi ini adalah mengidentifikasi hoax atau sebuah kebohongan telepon dari surga di dalam sebuah kota fiksi Coldwater. Peneliti menggunakan penelitian kualitatif untuk mengidentifikasi hoax di dalam cerita tersebut. Data primer dan data sekunder merupakan 2 tipe data dalam penelitian ini. Data primer dari penelitian ini adalah novel *The First Phone Call From Heaven* oleh Mitch Albom dan novel terjemahan dalam bahasa Indonesia Telepon Pertama Dari Surga oleh Julanda Tantani. Dan data sekunder penelitian ini di ambil dari buku sastra, skripsi, tesis, disertai jurnal internasional, internet dan data lain yang dapat mendukung penelitian ini. Langkah-langkah mengumpulkan data sebagai berikut: membaca novel, mencari data informasi di internet, mengidentifikasi, mencatat hal yang penting, menyusun dan membentuk kesimpulan dan saran. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kisah kebohongan telepon dari surga ini bisa terpecahkan oleh seorang tokoh yang mempunyai sifat rasional kemudian dari kisah ini menunjukkan bahwa adanya iman, surga dan tuhan. Dan kebohongan dari surga ini menjelaskan jika kita percaya pada sesuatu keajaiban maka kita tidak perlu bukti. Hasil penelitian lainnya berhubungan dengan sosiologi pengarang menggunakan hoax bahwa selama ini pengarang menciptakan kebohongan di dalam novel ini karena selama merawat ibunya yang sedang sakit stroke dan tidak bisa bicara kemudian setelah ibunya meninggal dia mempunyai pengandaian jika saja orang yang sudah mati itu bisa menghubungi orang yang masih hidup maka menurutnya akan sangat bahagia mungkin itu bisa di anggapnya sebagai mukjizat.

Kata kunci : hoax, telepon dari surga, pendekatan sosiologi

Abstract

This study discusses a hoax or a lie, namely the lie of a phone call from heaven in a novel by Mitch Albom entitled *The First Phone Call From Heaven 2013* using the Sociological approach. The aim of this study is to identify hoaxes or telephone lies from heaven in a fictional city of Coldwater. The researcher used qualitative research to identify hoaxes in the story. Primary data and secondary data are 2 types of data in this study. The primary data from this research is Mitch Albom's *The First Phone Call From Heaven* and the Indonesian translation novel *Phone First From Heaven* by Julanda Tantani. And secondary data from this study was taken from literary books,

theses, accompanied by international journals, the internet and other data that could support this research. The steps to collect data are as follows: reading novels, searching for informative data on the internet, identifying, recording important things, compiling and forming conclusions and suggestions. The results of this study indicate that the story of a telephone lie from heaven can be solved by a figure who has a rational nature than from this story shows that there are faith, heaven, and god. And this lie from heaven explains if we believe in something miracle we don't need proof. The results of other studies related to sociology the author uses hoax that during this time the author created lies in this novel because while caring for his mother who was having a stroke and unable to talk later after his mother died he had a supposition if only the dead person could contact people who live, according to him, would be very happy, maybe it could be considered as a miracle.

Keywords: hoax, a phone call from heaven, sociological approach

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays hoax is widely spread in the society. According to Merriam Webster Dictionary hoax is to trick into believing or accepting as genuine something false and often impossible. The purpose of a hoax is usually to making some sensations, the more people are affected by a hoax that are spread, the more satisfied the person. The motive for spreading false news can usually be influenced by political motives, slandering someone, natural, ethnic, religious, magical events and others. someone will try to spread the hoax immediately and be read to many people. Therefore, for the readers that believe the news is true, they usually use complex and scientific terms. So that the news spreads quickly, sometimes they will give some threats or promise of some benefits to those who have spread the news. Hoax news also has a very bad impact on others, among which can harm a party or a provocative title and inaccurate news content can reap a variety of negative opinions, this negative opinion can harm the parties concerned besides the adverse effects that can occur due to hoax news that is to give a bad reputation for someone or something. it can be a source of slander and even spread wrong information. The factors that influence the existence of hoax as the social media revolution, media literacy, post-truth, and horizontal conflict.

Related to the novel, it tells about The First Phone Call From Heaven. One morning in Coldwater, Michigan, there was a phone call from heaven that shocked

the residents of the city. when the news was discovered by Sully Harding he did not immediately believe it. For him, dead people are still dead and it is impossible to contact people who are still alive. After the news spread Sully immediately investigated the case. Sully collects data to uncover events that he considers to be a hoax. After trying hard, then he managed to uncover this case of lies and find the culprit, Horace Belvin, an old man who lost his son who had died.

Before the researcher writes this research, there were two previous studies. The first study conducted by Hemix Gatut S (2017) entitled *The Need For Keeping Hope Reflected In Mitch Albom's The First Phone Call From Heaven (2013): Sociological Approach*. Second Miss. Robeeah Duereh (2015) entitled "A Translation Analysis Of English Modal Verbs In The First Phone Call From Heaven Novel Into Telepon Pertama Dari Surga By Julanda Tantani". A third study conducted by Masolaeh Yalo (2015) entitled "Translation Analysis Of Compound Sentence In Mitch Albom's Novel: The First Phone Call From Heaven Into Telepon Pertama Dari Surga By Julanda Tantani". Considering the previous studies above, the researcher wants to analysis *The First Phone Call From Heaven* novel. They are having same the research, which is about "A Translation Analysis Of English Modal Verbs" and "Translation Analysis Of Compound Sentence" in the novel *The First Phone Call From Heaven into Telephone Pertama Dari Surga by Julanda Tantani.*" They are using different theories to make the research and they are doing research focused on linguistic studies.

Based on the previous study above, the researcher in this study conducted a study entitled *Fighting Against Hoax In Mitch Albom's The First Phone Call From Heaven (2013): Sociological Approach*. The researcher used the sociological approach. There are three major principles in the sociology of literature namely as Sociology of the author, the content of literary work and the impact of literacy on the community (Wellek and Warren, 1993:111-112). The researcher uses the sociological approach because of this literary work also as a reflection of the social situation of the author that related to their background that influence. Related the issue, this study intended to formulate research questions as follows; what is indicates hoax in *The First Phone*

Call from Heaven novel? how is hoax describe in The novel? And why did the author address the hoax?

2. METHOD

The type of this research is descriptive qualitative research. The object of this research is divided two namely material object and formal object. The material object of the study is Mitch Albom's Novel The First Phone Call From Heaven (2013), published by the writer's Harper Collins. A number of the pages of this novel is 311 pages. The genre of the novel is religion fiction. The formal object of the study is the issue of fighting against hoax that depicted in the novel. Type of the data consists of primary data and secondary data. The source of primary data is Mitch Albom Novel The First Phone Call from Heaven (2013) and translation Novel The First Phone Call from Heaven in the Indonesian language that is "Telepon Pertama Dari Surga" by Julanda Tantani. The sources of secondary data are taken from other sources related the study, such as research paper, thesis, dissertation, article, journal, blog, Internet and any other source with can support this study. The researchers used some steps to collect the data as follows; reading the novel The First Call Phone From Heaven by Mitch Albom, browsing to the internet to get information and article, identifying the problem and finding the data, taking important notes of important data, drawing a conclusion and suggest and reading author biography. The techniques of data analysis used a descriptive method and a sociological approach to analyses the issue.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Indicator of hoax

3.1.1 Engineering

In this event that is indicate lies and engineering. the lie, in this case, is a mysterious phone call from heaven that comes to some Coldwater residents. The call shocked Coldwater residents as well as residents around Coldwater and journalists, the incident also attracted the attention of people outside Coldwater. When the call came, the city that had been fine suddenly seemed strange. Like

Katherine Yellin, which in the end spread the news and Tess Rafferty who could not believe that a dead person could call back.

3.1.2 Regret

Horace's suffering was so deep that he conveyed all of his heart and his reason when making a lie to Sully he also tried to apologize to Sully for all his actions. Horace also felt sorry that he had run out of time to improve his relationship with his son Elliot Gray. Horace has been at loggerheads with Elliot since he worked at the government and must guard state secrets. Elliot disapproved of Horace's work because his work was so time-consuming and finally they both rarely met.

3.1.3 Vested interest

In the case of a lie made by Horace Belvin, not because he deliberately caused chaos in the city of Coldwater. Actually, Horace did have a purpose for what he had done in Coldwater. He wanted to show that we should all believe in heaven. He wants to realize the hopes of the people he has left behind and wants to make them believe about heaven.

3.1.4 Syndication

In the case of this lie, Horace was assisted by several people from the family members of his victims who had directly provided Horace with information, he also met the luck factor because he worked at the cemetery and met the perfect time to take action on this telephone lie. When he worked as one of the state secret agents, Horace tried to sneak into a room containing a government-owned voice hacking device, which was brought to his house as a tool to carry out his actions and from the tool he could collect sound recordings from people who had to make millions of calls.

3.2 Depiction of Hoax

3.2.1 Through Character

In this event, this indicates hoax maker is Horace Belvin. An old man, about sixty years old, pale, thick eyebrows and thin hair, like the color of straw, and then the hoax distribution is Katherine Yellin, and the victim is the citizen of Coldwater, and the last rational character is Sully Harding.

3.2.2 Setting

The author wrote some places such as a church, hall, and Horace house as a place to collect data, recognition, and a place to carry out the actions of telephone calls in Coldwater.

3.2.3 Event

In this event there are some plan who make telephone lies that is Horace Belvin, engineering hoax who made in this novel is the existence of a telephone call that is directly connected with people who have died, then listing the victim, phone call, suspect, and demolition

3.3 Reason of Addressing Hoax

Albom's write the novel because he is inspired by his mother and other people story. In the talk show event, Mitch Albom tells about with presenter about a little family. Where there are a husband and wife who lost their daughter. At night, the husband and wife were watching television in the living room. Suddenly, a photo of their daughter in the walls fallen on the floor. According to Albom, it is a message or mark of their daughter who has died. And also, the author tells about his mother. the author mother died of stroke disease. The author said if his mother right really cannot talk during stroke disease. he had a solution for this problem. He asked with his mother to communicate with Albom just use writing messages or send e-mails. But, his mother disagrees with Albom, his mother choose to speak with him without sending a message or e-mail. His mother said, to speak with him directly more value and meaning.

3.4 Discussion

The writer attends to discuss fighting against hoax in Mitch Albom novels. The discussion focuses on fighting against hoax especially in Michigan, Coldwater, United States of America as the setting of Albom's novels. The novels entitled *The First Phone Call From Heaven* is a novel published in 2013. Mitch Albom novels is a reflection the author during his mother tending sick was suffering a stroke and human in the United States of America. It was telling a story about the picture of how the author and tell the story about fighting against hoax after they lost the person they loved.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis in the previous chapter, the study comes to the following conclusion, Firstly fighting against hoax describe the novel include the characteristics of hoax maker, hoax distribution, victim, rational character. In this novel the author describes some of the fightings against hoax there is Horace Belvin as the hoax maker, then Katherine Yellin and Amy Pen as the hoax distribution, Sully Harding as rational character, and the victim is Tess Rafferty, Katherine Yellin, Jack Sellers, Ellias Rowe and there are also a number of the residents who did not mention the initial. The victim who had received a call from heaven numbered eight people.

Secondly, the type of fighting against hoax depicted in the novels can be categorized into three types that are through characters, setting, and events. According to an analysis of the previous chapter, trough characters can be seen through hoax maker, hoax distributors, victim, and rational character to describe the several characters that are categorized as mentioned. The question related to the hoax, the hoax. The other is important events namely plan, engineering hoax, listing the victim, phone call, suspect, and demolition that is experienced by the characters in the story. And the setting there is a hall, church and Horace house.

Thirdly, Mitch Albom's presenting fighting against hoax in this novel *The First Phone Call From Heaven* to show the real picture in Coldwater, Michigan about the people who live there and there are many different of characters in this novel with various perspective in accepting phone events from heaven. There are most of them who believe in heaven, god, and life after death.

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