

Alleged Religion Blasphemy in Contemporary Indonesia

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Abstract: *This study is aimed at describing the discourse on religion blasphemy in contemporary Indonesia. It is intended to figure out the context of situation and the ideology behind the texts. The research methodology is based on systemic functional linguistics. The findings suggest that the three main texts can be highlighted in terms of Field, Tenor and Mode. The Field in text # 1 has something to do with reporting that police have questioned Indonesia's most prominent governor, whose alleged blasphemy sparked a mass demonstration in the country's capital that descended into violence. The case is being ushered through following the Friday violence which followed a demonstration by around 100,000 people outside Jakarta's presidential palace calling for the ethnic Chinese governor to face charges of publicly insulting Islam. Text # 2 deals with reported that 100,000 signatures calling for legal action against the man who appears to have incited the protests on 4 November in Jakarta. BuniYani, a former journalist and communications professor at the London School in Central Jakarta, has confessed to manipulating the words of the capital's governor, which led to charges of blasphemy against him. Text # 3 is concerned with anti-Ahok sentiments, which peaked at the Nov.4 rally by Islamic organizations against the governor's alleged blasphemous speech, were considered only political maneuvers amid the Jakarta gubernatorial election campaign but these would destroy diversity in the country if ignored. Tenor analyses suggest that all those three texts indicate that the roles the participants are playing are those in which they are of equal power. Mode analyses argue that there is no visual or aural contact between the writer and the reader(s) in Text # 1, Text # 2 and Text # 3, and thus no possibility of immediate feedback and even the possibilities of delayed feedback are limited. The impact of ideology register includes by whom they are initiated, what sort of actions or events are discussed, by whom the actions are responded, and how.*

Keywords: *blasphemy, discourse, ideology, field, mode, tenor*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Friday Nov.4 violence which followed a demonstration by around 100,000 people outside Jakarta's presidential palace called for the ethnic Chinese governor to face charges of publicly insulting Islam. Ahok -- a Christian -- is accused of publicly insulting Islam, however he says he was calling for people not to be "deceived" by those using a Quranic verse, Al Maidah: Chapter 51, not that the verse itself was insulting. This study is aimed at describing the topic of the issue, how the power relationship between the participants involved, and what role the language has played in the discourse as well as the impact of ideology on each of these register variables.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Deriving from the Latin *Blasphemia*, by definition, blasphemy is the exhibition of irreverent behavior or language towards God, religion or anything held sacred. For those who have an unshakeable faith in their beliefs, religious leaders, holy book, places of worship and rituals, it is a sensitive issue. It has invited debate and controversy, however, when one comes to the questions on what acts can be considered 'irreverent', what punishment for those who did the acts, and what role should be played by the law to prevent blasphemy. How do the texts on religion blasphemy in contemporary Indonesia make sense?

In systemic functional linguistics, language has been deemed as functional and the function is to make meanings. These meanings are influenced by context of situation and context of culture. Language use is a semiotic system that is making meanings by choosing (Eggins, 1994) There are three nuances of meanings, they are interpersonal meaning, ideational meaning and textual meaning. Interpersonal meaning deals with feelings, attitudes and judgment. Ideational meaning concerns with the content of the issue and textual meaning has something to do with how the language of the issue is structured (Halliday&Mattheissen, 2004) The context of situation includes Field, Tenor and Mode. Field is concerned with the topic of the discussion. Tenor deals with the power relationship between participants involved. Mode means the role played by the language on the issue (Martin & Rose, 2004)

Ideology here refers to the values held by the participants consciously or unconsciously, the bias and the perspectives adopted. It could be traced by figuring out who initiates, what sort of actions or events are discussed, who responds it and how (Eggins, 1994) Eagleton (1991:157) said that “any such social field is necessarily structured by a set of unspoken rules for what can be validly uttered or perceived within it; and these rules thus operate as a mode of what Bourdieu terms symbolic violence”.

Register analysis

Context of situation can be construed through the analyses of Field, Tenor and Mode. In what follows, Field which deals with the topic of discussion and Tenor which has something to do with the power relationship between participants involved as well as Mode which is concerned with the role of the language are analyzed and discussed. There are three main texts under the investigation in this study. The discourse on religion blasphemy in contemporary Indonesia can be described in Table 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1 Field in discourse on religion blasphemy in contemporary Indonesia

Text # 1	Text # 2	Text # 3
<p>Police have questioned Indonesia's most prominent governor, whose alleged blasphemy sparked a mass demonstration in the country's capital that descended into violence.</p> <p>The case is being ushered through following the Friday violence which followed a demonstration by around 100,000 people outside Jakarta's presidential palace calling for the ethnic Chinese governor to face charges of publicly insulting Islam.</p> <p>Ahok -- a Christian -- is accused of publicly insulting Islam, however he says he was calling for people not to be “deceived” by those using a Quranic verse, Al Maidah: Chapter 51, not that the verse itself was insulting.</p> <p>At the end of October, the governor voluntarily turned himself into police and publicly apologized to Muslims for any unintentional offence. At least 10 parties have reported him and demanded police launch a probe.</p> <p>A wave of demonstrations demanding the acceleration of legal proceedings against Ahok subsequently occurred in several regions of Indonesia, peaking in Friday's protest.</p>	<p>A petition has gathered more than 100,000 signatures calling for legal action against the man who appears to have incited the protests on 4 November in Jakarta.</p> <p>BuniYani, a former journalist and communications professor at the London School in Central Jakarta, has confessed to manipulating the words of the capital's governor, which led to charges of blasphemy against him.</p> <p>After calm returned to the capital, questions were asked as to what could have unleashed this wave of protests. At present, Yani is the only suspect.</p> <p>Yani admitted that he had misrepresented Ahok's words and omitted word “by mistake”, changing the meaning of the sentence and modifying it to an insult against the Muslim community.</p> <p>In his original statement Ahok said was: "do not believe everything what people say . . . because often you are deceived by using verse 51 of Al Maidah (the fifth surah of the Qur'an). By omitting "using", it left the impression that he was saying that the Qur'an deceives Muslims.</p>	<p>Interfaith activist Mohammad Guntur Romli has called on tolerant Muslims in Indonesia to speak up and counter religion-driven sentiments against Jakarta Governor BasukiTjahaja "Ahok" Purnama.</p> <p>Guntur said anti-Ahok sentiments, which peaked at the Nov.4 rally by Islamic organizations against the governor's alleged blasphemous speech, were only political maneuvers amid the Jakarta gubernatorial election campaign but these would destroy diversity in the country if ignored.</p> <p>"Several groups out there aim to change our Constitution, which upholds our religious harmony, into a KhilafahIslamiyah [Islamic caliphate]," the activist told <i>The Jakarta Post</i> on Monday.</p> <p>Protests against Ahok developed after part of his speech, in which he cited a verse from the Quran, was uploaded by BuniYani, a communications lecturer, who later admitted that he had made errors in transcribing the video he uploaded on his Facebook page.</p>

Field analysis

Field analysis suggests that Text # 1, Text #2, Text # 3 and Text # 4 do share a common field of discourse on alleged blasphemy which sparked a mass demonstration in the country's capital that descended into violence. The field of a text can be associated with the realization of experiential meanings; these experiential meanings are realized through the Transitivity patterns of the grammar.

Text # 1 reported that police have questioned Indonesia's most prominent governor, whose alleged blasphemy sparked a mass demonstration in the country's capital that descended into violence. The case is being ushered through following the Friday violence which followed a demonstration by around 100,000 people outside Jakarta's presidential palace calling for the ethnic Chinese governor to face charges of publicly insulting Islam. Ahok -- a Christian -- is accused of publicly insulting Islam, however he says he was calling for people not to be “deceived” by those using a Quranic verse, Al Maidah: Chapter 51, not that the verse itself was insulting.

Text # 2 reported that 100,000 signatures calling for legal action against the man who appears to have incited the protests on 4 November in Jakarta. BuniYani, a former journalist and communications professor at the London School in Central Jakarta, has confessed to manipulating the words of the capital's governor, which led to charges of blasphemy against him. For several weeks, Jakarta's governor, Tjahaja “Ahok” BasukiPurnama, an ethnic Chinese and a Christian, has been under attack after he was accused of "slandering of Islam".

Text # 3 exposes Interfaith activist Mohammad Guntur Romli who has called on tolerant Muslims in Indonesia to speak up and counter religion-driven sentiments against Jakarta Governor BasukiTjahaja "Ahok" Purnama. Guntur said anti-Ahok sentiments, which peaked at the Nov.4 rally by Islamic organizations against the governor's alleged blasphemous speech, were only political maneuvers amid the Jakarta gubernatorial

election campaign but these would destroy diversity in the country if ignored."Several groups out there aim to change our Constitution, which upholds our religious harmony, into a KhilafahIslamiyah [Islamic caliphate]," the activist told *The Jakarta Post* on Monday."Tolerant Muslims as the majority must no longer keep silent. Our Constitution has opened the opportunity for anyone to compete in elections regardless of their religious and racial backgrounds," he said.

Table 2 Tenor in discourse on religion blasphemy in contemporary Indonesia

Text # 1	Text # 2	Text # 3
Indicating that the roles the participants are playing are those in which they are of equal power. The participants in the text involve the police and BasukiTjahjaPurnama. The roles they are playing are those in which they are of equal power. The roles they playing are those that bring them into infrequent contact. The roles taken by both participants are those in which the affective involvement between them is low.	Involving 100.000 petition signatures and BuniYani, a former journalist and communications professor at the London School in Central Jakarta. The roles they are playing are those that bring them into infrequent contact. The roles they are playing are those in which the affective involvement between them is low. They roles they are playing are those in which they are of equal power.	Suggesting that the participants involve Interfaith activist Mohammad Guntur Romli and tolerant Muslims in Indonesia. The roles being played by both participants are those in which they are of equal power. The roles they are playing are those that bring them into frequent contact. The roles they are playing are those in which the affective involvement between them is high.

Tenor analysis

The tenor of the text can be associated with the realization of interpersonal meanings: these interpersonal meanings are realized through the Mood patterns of the grammar. Tenor can be broken down into three different continua: power, affective involvement, and contact. It means that general notion of role relationship can be seen as a complex of these simultaneous dimensions. The power continuum positions situations in terms of whether the role we are playing are those in which we are of equal or unequal power. The contact continuum positions situations in terms of whether the roles we are playing are those that bring us into frequent or infrequent contact. The affective involvement continuum positions the situations in terms of whether the roles we are playing are those in which the affective involvement between us is high or low.

Text # 1 indicates that the roles the participants are playing are those in which they are of equal power. The participants in the text involve the police and BasukiTjahjaPurnama. They roles they are playing are those in which they are of equal power. The roles they playing are those that bring them into infrequent contact. The roles taken by both participants are those in which the affective involvement between them is low.

Text # 2 involves 100.000 petition signatures and BuniYani, a former journalist and communications professor at the London School in Central Jakarta. The roles they are playing are those that bring them into infrequent contact. The roles they are playing are those in which the affective involvement between them is low. They roles they are playing are those in which they are of equal power.

Text # 3 suggests that the participants involve Interfaith activist Mohammad Guntur Romli and tolerant Muslims in Indonesia. The roles being played by both participants are those in which they are of equal power. The roles they are playing are those that bring them into frequent contact. The roles they are playing are those in which the affective involvement between them is high.

Table 3 Mode in discourse on religion blasphemy in contemporary Indonesia

Text # 1	Text # 2	Text # 3
There is no visual or aural contact between the writer and the reader(s) in Text # 1, Text # 2 and Text # 3, and thus no possibility of immediate feedback and even the possibilities of delayed feedback are limited.	There is no visual or aural contact between the writer and the reader(s) in Text # 1, Text # 2 and Text # 3, and thus no possibility of immediate feedback and even the possibilities of delayed feedback are limited.	There is no visual or aural contact between the writer and the reader(s) in Text # 1, Text # 2 and Text # 3, and thus no possibility of immediate feedback and even the possibilities of delayed feedback are limited.

Mode analysis

By definition, Mode is the role language is playing in the interaction. Martin (1984) suggests that this role can be seen as involving two simultaneous continua which describe two different types of distance in the relation between language and situation. As written texts, there is no visual or aural contact between the writer and the reader(s) in Text # 1, Text # 2 and Text # 3, and thus no possibility of immediate feedback and even the possibilities of delayed feedback are limited. It can be argued that language is all that there is. Language here is used to reflect on some topic. Martin (1984) suggests that two simultaneous continua are involved to describe two different types of distance in the relation between language and situation.

Ideology in the Texts

How experiential meanings encoded in texts can be related to the impact of ideology on field including by whom they are initiated, what sort of actions or events are discussed, by whom the actions are responded, and how they are responded.

Text # 1 is initiated by the Friday violence which followed a demonstration by around 100,000 people outside Jakarta's presidential palace calling for the ethnic Chinese governor to face charges of publicly insulting Islam. The event is responded by the police by questioning Indonesia's most prominent governor, whose alleged blasphemy sparked a mass demonstration in the country's capital that descended into violence.

Text # 2 is initiated by an accusation to Ahok -- a Christian -- as publicly insulting Islam, when he was calling for people not to be "deceived" by those using a Quranic verse, Al Maidah: Chapter 51. The accusation is responded by 100,000 signatures calling for legal action against the man who appears to have incited the protests on 4 November in Jakarta. Buni Yani, a former journalist and communications professor at the London School in Central Jakarta, has confessed to manipulating the words of the capital's governor, which led to charges of blasphemy against him.

Text # 3 is initiated by the fact that tolerant Muslims as the majority keep silent on the issue of the alleged blasphemy that sparked a mass demonstration in the country's capital that descended into violence. The fact is responded by Interfaith activist Mohammad Guntur Romli by calling on tolerant Muslims in Indonesia to speak up and counter religion-driven sentiments against Jakarta Governor Basuki Tjahaja "Ahok" Purnama. Guntur said anti-Ahok sentiments, which peaked at the Nov.4 rally by Islamic organizations against the governor's alleged blasphemous speech, were only political maneuvers amid the Jakarta gubernatorial election campaign but these would destroy diversity in the country if ignored. He added that several groups out there aim to change the Constitution, which upholds the religious harmony, into a Khilafah Islamiyah [Islamic caliphate]. He appealed tolerant Muslims as the majority must no longer keep silent. He said the Constitution has opened the opportunity for anyone to compete in elections regardless of their religious and racial backgrounds.

III. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that all those three texts indicate that the roles the participants are playing are those in which they are of equal power. Mode analyses argue that there is no visual or aural contact between the writer and the reader(s) in Text # 1, Text # 2 and Text # 3, and thus no possibility of immediate feedback and even the possibilities of delayed feedback are limited. The impact of ideology register includes by whom they are initiated, what sort of actions or events are discussed, by whom the actions are responded, and how they are responded.

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Appendix

- [1] Text # 1
- [2] Police have questioned Indonesia's most prominent governor, /whose alleged blasphemy sparked a mass demonstration in the country's capital /that descended into violence./
- [3] Governor Basuki "Ahok" Tjahaja Purnama attended an appointment at National Police Headquarters on Monday morning, / accompanied by his campaign team and lawyers./
- [4] There, the head of the criminal section of the National Police said / Ahok was presented with a video of a speech / he made to Thousand Islands residents -- a region of Jakarta -- and the testimonies of several witnesses./
- [5] "We need him to confirm the [validity of the] video, / particularly related to the testimony of expert witnesses," / said Inspector Gen. Ari Dono Sukmanto./
- [6] The case is being ushered through following the Friday violence / which followed a demonstration by around 100,000 people outside Jakarta's presidential palace / calling for the ethnic Chinese governor to face charges of publicly insulting Islam./
- [7] After some protesters started to throw stones and bottles, / chanted "war" and "revolution" and broke through barricades, / police responded with tear gas and water cannon./
- [8] The government and protest leaders subsequently agreed to speed up the probe into the alleged blasphemy, / saying it would be solved within two weeks./
- [9] So far, police have asked for testimony from 22 witnesses, / among them representatives of the Indonesian Ulema Council, and experts on the Quran, criminal law and linguistics./
- [10] Ahok -- a Christian -- is accused of publicly insulting Islam, / however he says he was calling for people not to be "deceived" by those using a Quranic verse, Al Maidah: Chapter 51 /, not that the verse itself was insulting./
- [11] At the end of October, the governor voluntarily turned himself into police / and publicly apologized to Muslims for any unintentional offence. / At least 10 parties have reported him / and demanded police launch a probe./
- [12] A wave of demonstrations demanding the acceleration of legal proceedings against Ahok subsequently occurred in several regions of Indonesia, / peaking in Friday's protest./
- [13] On Monday afternoon, President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo visited the office of the country's biggest Muslim organization, Nahdlatul Ulama, / where he had a closed-door meeting./
- [14] On Sunday, Widodo asked political and religious leaders to help cool tensions./
- [15] "In the coming week, we will invite political figures and religious leaders / to give input into how we can cool the situation down," / detik.com quoted him / as saying during a teleconference to Indonesians in Australia./

- [16] Indonesia's president was forced to delay a much-anticipated Nov. 6-8 visit to the region following Friday's violence./ (<http://www.worldbulletin.net/haberler/179761/probe-into-alleged-blasphemy-by-jakarta-governor-begins>)

Text # 2

- [17] A petition has gathered more than 100,000 signatures / calling for legal action against the man / who appears to have incited the protests on 4 November in Jakarta./
- [18] BuniYani, a former journalist and communications professor at the London School in Central Jakarta, has confessed to manipulating the words of the capital's governor, / which led to charges of blasphemy against him./
- [19] For several weeks, Jakarta's governor, Tjahaja "Ahok" BasukiPurnama, an ethnic Chinese and a Christian, has been under attack / after he was accused of "slandering of Islam"/.
- [20] Last Friday (4 November), tens of thousands of Islamic radicals took to the streets to demand his prosecution. / The event, which resulted in violence, was infiltrated by political agitators with the aim of discrediting President JokoWidodo./
- [21] After calm returned to the capital, / questions were asked / as to what could have unleashed this wave of protests. / At present, Yani is the only suspect./
- [22] Speaking on television, the professor admitted / that he had misrepresented Ahok's words / and omitted word "by mistake", / changing the meaning of the sentence / and modifying it to an insult against the Muslim community. / He rejected however the accusation / that he was behind the protest movement / that ended in the demonstration in Jakarta./
- [23] In his original statement Ahok said was: "do not believe everything / what people say . . . / because often you are deceived by using verse 51 of Al Maidah (the fifth surah of the Qur'an)./ By omitting "using", it left the impression that he was saying that the Qur'an deceives Muslims./
- [24] According to many observers, the case against the governor now falls apart. / Yani appears to have deliberately posted a doctored video online / showing Ahok uttering the offending phrase./ and accused the political leader on his Facebook page of "religious defamation"/.
- [25] On the basis on Yani's "confession", the petition calls for the police / to shed light on the case / and charge the professor with moral and intellectual dishonesty. / "His action are a provocation / that degenerated into fury among most Muslim communities."/
- [26] Some academics slammed the whole blasphemy episode / as a set-up to harm the Christian governor./
- [27] "Are God and religion so weak that they need to be defended by their community?" / asks SarlitoWirawanSarwono, a professor of psychology at the University of Indonesia./
- [28] Islam, he noted, does not need to be defended. / By contrast, if anyone needs to be defended / it is orphans and people down on their luck./ (<http://www.worldbulletin.net/haberler/179761/probe-into-alleged-blasphemy-by-jakarta-governor-begins>)

Text # 3

- [29] Interfaith activist Mohammad Guntur Romli has called on tolerant Muslims in Indonesia / to speak up and counter religion-driven sentiments against Jakarta Governor BasukiTjahaja "Ahok" Purnama./
- [30] Guntur said / anti-Ahok sentiments, which peaked at the Nov.4 rally by Islamic organizations against the governor's alleged blasphemous speech, were only political maneuvers amid the Jakarta gubernatorial election campaign / but these would destroy diversity in the country if ignored./
- [31] "Several groups out there aim to change our Constitution, / which upholds our religious harmony, into a KhilafahIslamiyah [Islamic caliphate],"/ the activist told The Jakarta Post on Monday./
- [32] "Tolerant Muslims as the majority must no longer keep silent. / Our Constitution has opened the opportunity for anyone to compete in elections regardless of their religious and racial backgrounds," / he said./
- [33] Protests against Ahok developed / after part of his speech, in which he cited a verse from the Quran, was uploaded by BuniYani, a communications lecturer, / who later admitted / that he had made errors in transcribing the video / he uploaded on his Facebook page./
- [34] The video went viral and sparked public outrage, / which eventually led to Nov. 4's mass rally by several Islamic organizations, / which called on the police to conduct a transparent legal process against Ahok over his alleged blasphemy./(<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2016/11/07/tolerant-muslims-encouraged-to-speak-up-defend-harmony.html>)

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