

That Unjust God: Critical Discourse Analysis on the Violations of Religious Freedom

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ABSTRACT

West Sumatra is believed to have been hit by a crisis of religious freedom and intolerance in recent years. Thus, this paper aimed to reveal the portrait of democracy violations committed by the local government in West Sumatra focused on religious freedom. The critical discourse analysis methodology was used to dismantle the basis of discourse by referring to the theoretical framework offered by Sawirman's BREAK (2014) as a comprehensive way of analysis in understanding a political discourse. The result of the analysis shows that the discourse of violations of religious freedom by the West Sumatra's regional government is realized through the implementation of general and special regulations that cornering minority groups and emphasize attention to aspects of morality so as to create an unhealthy democratic atmosphere.

Keywords: *Critical Discourse Analysis, Religious Freedom, Democracy Index*

1. INTRODUCTION

Discourse analysis is an approach to the study of linguistics that has developments quite revolutionary lately [1],[2]. Researchers, scholars and language analysts attempt to encourage people to understand a language no longer as a passive abstract communication system. Furthermore, language and word have extraordinary potential and possibilities, especially in comprehending historical, social, economic and political events [3].

Laswell and Kaplan [4] revealed that the textual discourse is a place to hide political interests. Behind the text, there is a process and also the result of power struggles both at the individual level and at the structural level. Texts could store human political activities such as opinions, invitations, orders, until the coercion of the will by the parties that hold an interest [5], [6], [7].

This study demanded to highlight the political dynamics of the text, especially as a medium for storing political activity between citizens and state administrators [8]. Mass media texts were chosen as the material object because they were considered relevant and representative in communicating events or realities that connect the state and citizens [9]. In addition, news texts in the mass media are considered neutral from political influence and pressure. Ultimately, the text is able to display an accurate and factual reality.

The problem highlighted in this study is the violation of religious freedom performed by the local government in relation to the Indonesia Democratic Index (hereinafter IDI). Violation in this case can be interpreted as an act of removal, limitation or reduction of rights and the basic freedom of everyone to think, to believe and doing religious practices [10]. However, the scope of this study is limited to the act of coercion to citizens in conducting

the religious teachings. These phenomena were obtained from statements of local government officials recorded in the text of the printed mass media.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was chosen as the research approach. This decision was based on the opinion that CDA is considered to be able to facilitate this research in uncovering the configuration of the text as a discourse that functions politically [11]. According to the CDA, language formation contains the function of the relationship between textual construction with social, institutional, and ideological conditions in the processes of production and its reception. Linguistic structures thereafter are used to systematize and transform reality [12]. Therefore, the dimensions of history, social structure, and ideology are the main source of knowledge and hypotheses within the framework of linguistic criticism [13].

2. METHOD

In its core, critical discourse analysis can be categorized into qualitative research that is descriptive and argumentative in nature because it seeks to explain the abstract value (quality) through the provision of arguments [14], [15], [16], [17]. Data triangulation can be acquired from primary data sources taken from selected mass media text and IDI preparation manuals from BPS and other sources. Therefore, the work process was validated with secondary data sources in the form of knowledge and understanding from researchers as native speakers of Indonesian language for more than twenty years and lecturers in Journalism courses in numerous years. This study implemented the bibliography and documentation method and is continued with the note taking technique in the process of collecting data. The data in this study were all texts sourced from selected daily

newspaper from West Sumatra regional named Singgalang for a year of publication in particular 2016. After that, the data were classified according to predetermined Indicators namely the text in the newspaper containing statements of Government officials which limits freedom or requires people to practice their religion [9].

In analyzing data, distributional methods are chosen in a sense. The method used to analyze language systems or the overall regulations that are set in the language based on the behavior or characteristics of certain lingual units of the language [18]. So, the language elements are analyzed according to their linguistic behavior (referring to the Chomsky's performance concept). In this study, four of five techniques were applied, namely decomposition, deletion, sorting and permutation and complemented by content analysis at a later stage to reveal several ideas contained in the deeper structure of the discursive text.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1.1. Position of the Discourses

Table 1. Identification of Discourse Position

Position of the Discourse	Primer	Secondary
Based on scope and cause of appearance	General regulation	Specific regulation

1.2. Configuration of the Discourses

Detailed and actual information of a discourse typically does not appear in the surface structure (S-structure). This issue is usually located in deep and hidden layers or popularly known as Deep Structure (D-structure) (see [19], [20]). The clues can be identified through a semiotic sequence (the connection between signs that communicate meaning) and in between subjects, objects, and statements. Therefore, analysis on the relationship between the elements above will reveal the discourse that is actually being expressed by the structure. In this study, the concept of discourse-inquiry conducted on expressions found in news languages in the mass media.

1.1.1. Primary Discourse

1.1.1.1. Form Analysis

The identified form of primary discourse 'General Regulation' in the mass media text is the directive speech act. This speech act is regularly applied because it is part of the innate nature of a regulation which regulates people to do or not do something within the scope of government. In interactions in a government (region level), the official seems like having power and control over the society [21]. Community acts as speech partners have a lower status

In Sawirman's BREAK [22] paradigm, the Position of Discourse feature functions to make a classification. Based on the data collected, there are two sources of selected discourse that were the object of analysis. The first object was a discourse with a 'general regulation' pattern, the second type is a 'specific regulation' discourse. To facilitate the process of grouping between these two discourses and making it easier to mention them in the analysis, then these two discourses were categorized into two terms: primary and secondary discourse. For more details, the primary discourse acts as the main discourse and the next discourse comes as a comparison.

The parameters to be used as a benchmark or separation of discourse are based on the scope and cause of occurrence. Both of these discourses have limits on the objectives to be addressed. In addition, because the emergence of these two discourses is also caused by certain factors and has specificity to one another. Separation based on these parameters is expected to reveal the form of language used, ideas and objectives of these two discourses.

Hence, the classification of the position of discourse in this study can be stretched as follows.

(and power) so that they can be regulated within certain limits.

Ownership of power and control over the community is a government's special role of the leader/organizer in a territory. Because of the privilege and in realizing the desired government, a regional leaders can use a directive approach to communicate their ideas through making regulations in this case in the form of Perda (regional regulation), Perkab (regency regulation), Pernag (nagari's regulation) and so on.

Besides in the form of Directive Speech Acts, the General Regulation discourse also has characteristics that are certainly identified. This characteristic is the clarity of the parties being targeted as objects governed by the regulations. These indications can be found in the following data.

1. Kaum Hawa Diwajibkan Berjilbab (Id6,S:12/3/16)
Objek Women are required to veil
Object
2. Murid Wajib Ikut Shalat Zuhur Berjamah (Id6,S:5/10/16)
Objek Students Must Join Zuhur Prayers in Congregation
Object

3. Bupati Solok ajak semua staf di lingkungan Pemkab Solok untuk mengikuti acara wirid.
Objek
Solok Regent invited all staff in the Solok Regency Government to attend sermons
Object

In data (1), the object being targeted is *kaum hawa* (women). The inversion process that occurs in the structure above make the Object function experience fronting and the Subject function has experienced retreat (tailing) even hidden (omitting). A similar formula is repeated in data (2) where the object being targeted is *siswa* (student). The difference is only in the predicate function that is not provided by the prefix 'di-' as a marker of passivation.

However, the most significant differentiation in the construction occurs in data (3). Targeted objects no longer experience prioritization through the process of fronting and stand behind Predicate function as seen in the constituent *semua staf*. The sentence structure does not experience significant transformation. In addition, the structure also does not undergo omitting in one function.

1.1.1.2. Essential Analysis

The first stage of data analysis aims to identify linguistic forms which formulated each discourse. The next stage of analysis is to discover the essence to find messages / ideas or meanings embedded in the external structure (S-structure) of each discourse. According to Chomsky [20], this is a mentalistic process that has the potential to reveal the particular content of language behavior.

Sawirman [22] argues that in a group of discourses even though they are in the same purpose, it is not necessarily carrying the same messages/ideas. This dynamical process is possible because language has "generative" property [20]. Therefore, in the General Regulations discourse, there are variations in messages/ideas that differ from one another. The enquiry process is relevant with the results of the form-analysis which is the main foundation in the discovery of the essence of each discourse.

From the primary discourse in the form of directive speech acts, there are three ideas that can be put forward. The first idea is victim-blaming. The fronting process of the Object function as the intended target implies that it is the main concern of this preposition. Whereas in this case, the object being targeted is the element of citizens who are inhibited or impaired in their freedom to practice religion or are called victims. With this fronting technique, the government can lay the blame entirely on the Object function, specifically the people and minimize the involvement of the the government as an active-subject (Actor) from the violations of freedom of belief or religion.

The second idea is the regulation emphasis on marginal groups for example *kaum hawa*/women and student/young people. As contained in data (1) and (2), the targeted object that is identified in the text of the news above is

kaum hawa and *murid*/students (schools). Both elements of citizens have the weakest position in power in the midst of society making it very vulnerable to experience restriction, even oppression in the relationship between the state and its citizen.

The third idea that can be occurred is hidden discrimination. Referring to the explanation of the first and second ideas, there is an unequal treatment between vulnerable groups like women and children or other citizen groups. In data (3) it can be found that the Subject is followed by predicate that are persuasive 'ajak'/invite. Comparing with the preposition in data (1) and (2), the Predicates function were filled with imperative verbs *diwajibkan*/mandatory dan *wajib*/must. Moreover, the object being targeted is no longer prioritized through fronting process, and active-subject is present occupying the position as they should. Through the analysis of this transformation process, differences in ideas between discourses can be identified.

1.1.1.3. Spirit Analysis

The spirit contained identified in the primary discourse is the bias of justice. As revealed from the results of the analysis of the essential features, statements from government officials have a great tendency in targeting (hierarchically) weak groups in society such as women and children. In addition, these statements are also uttered with predicate which is categorized as imperative verbs 'wajib'/must. This implies the absence of negotiation space and the process of dialogue between government and citizens [23]. In fact, to create a democratic state, the role of the community in determining a policy is highly expected [24].

Furthermore, the government statements appear in different forms when dealing with community groups other than women and children. The structure no longer uses the Predicate function with imperative verb but persuasive *ajak*/invite. This model of verb implies openness and dialogue between participants in the speech event. This distinction reflects a considerable bias regarding justice in enforcing and socializing a regulation through statements by government officials.

1.1.2. Secondary Discourse

1.1.2.1. Form Analysis

For the secondary discourse Special Regulations, the linguistic form identified is compound-complex sentence. This type of sentence consist of two clauses which are "substantially not equal" [25]. Independent clause functions as the main clause; the dependent clause serves as a subordinate clause [26]. There is a complementary relationship between the main clause and the subordinate clause [27]. These characteristics can be found in the following data.

4. Cegah Terkikisnya Moral Pemuda, Sirukam Terapkan Perna (Id6,S:9/6/16)
 anak kalimat, induk kalimat
 To prevent the erosion of youth morale, Sirukam applied Perna
 Subordinate clause, main clause
5. Terkait Razia Warung Makanan, Walikota Berang atas Larangan Mendagri (Id6, S:16/6/16)
 anak kalimat, induk kalimat
 Due to food merchant’s sweeping, Mayor (of Padang) was furious with minister’s ban
 Subordinate, main clause
6. Tak Pandai Baca Qur’an, Pernikahan Catin Ditunda (Id6,S:18/6/16)
 anak kalimat induk kalimat
 Unable to read Koran, a wedding to be postponed
 Subordinate, main clause

Aside from the identified sentence structure, there is another relationship existed between these two clauses: ‘cause-effect’ pattern. Based on the result of analysis, subordinate clauses generally occupy a role as the cause; the main clause operate as the result. The constricted relationship between the two aims to emphasize the object in question.

1.1.2.2. Essential Analysis

Based on secondary discourse in the form of compound-complex sentences, the message that can be revealed is the cult of morality. Essentially, the measurement on the aspects of morality is merely subjective and varies between people. Referring to the results of discourse analysis in essence features, The (Regional) Government shows strong concern regarding the moral problems of citizens in their territory. This attention is motivated by an active attitude—even reactive—in responding to issues related to the moral matter.

If you focus attention on the subordinate clause in the data above, the issues highlighted by the regional government

Tabel 2. Movement Comparison between Primary and Secondary Discourse

	Primary	Secondary
Essence	repressive toward minor groups	moral repressive
Spirit	bias in justice	overreactive
Result	undemocratic atmosphere	undemocratic atmosphere
Type of movement	Convergent (KO)	convergent (KO)

Based on the table above, the general types of discourse movement identified is convergent. Both primary and secondary discourse have movements that are interrelated to one another so that it belongs to the type of convergent-

include ‘moral values’ in the data (4), ‘tolerance values’ in the data (5), and ‘cognitive capacity’ in the data (6). This is evidenced in the structure of the text which always emphasizes the subordinate clause through fronting technique and also serves as a cause for the emergence of statements by government officials. This emphasis on the causative element (subordinate clause) then that justifies the reaction of the Government which appears in the main clause which is come as a hereditary element.

1.1.2.3. Spirit Analysis

The identified spirit in secondary discourse is over-reactive government. Referring to the results of the analysis of the essential features, the statement of government officials seemed like an immature action. For example in data (4), the cause of the emergence of these government official statements is the erosion of youth morale. Government officials then took the initiative to respond to the issue and provide a regulation that required young people to return to surau/mosque. This action ultimately includes the imposition of belief towards citizens. Similar case with data (5) which shows carelessness of local government officials in response to the rules issued by the central government to not sweep food merchants during Ramadan.

Both descriptions of the data analysis above generate knowledge in the community that local government officials will act very quickly in response to matters related to morality. In addition, the government statement is generally a raw decision and without being preceded by in-depth studies or dialogue with more competent parties. As the result, this local government behavior reflects careless and disorderly political character.

1.3. Type of Movement of the Discourse

Based on the results of a thorough analysis of the discourse configuration features, thus the type of movement of the discourse above can be illustrated through the following table.

convergent (KO-KO). The characteristics of the movements of these two discourses are cooperative and compact. That is, the essence and enthusiasm contained in each form of discourse have a common goal and support each other.

Based on essential perspective, primary and secondary discourse appear to be identical. The statements of regional officials in Indonesia continually collide with the freedom of citizens in performing their religious tenets [28], [29]. This matter is getting worse with the approach of the local government in addressing these problems such as forcing or breaking into citizens' private spaces. Ultimately, the spirit that motivates both discourses reflect government's bias of justice and arrogance in the eyes of the public. As a result, the statements of local government officials which aim to promote and improve the welfare and security for the citizens were counterproductive.

4. CONCLUSION

The portraits of violations of religious freedom in West Sumatra are shown indicated by the basis of discourse primarily the imposition of religious practices on minority groups and based on certain existed morals. This kind of repression is certainly easier to manifest than targeting more powerful targets in society such as groups of men, the older generation or top officials in government circles. The coercion of religious practices by the government or government officials is exacerbated by cornering and blaming low-power/minority groups so as not to leave room for discussion. This is also supported by the paradigm of West Sumatra local government which emphasizes the integration of one religion into the joints of life through the ABS-SBK policy, including government administration.

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