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Making Sense of Discourse on Pluralism in Indonesia

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Abstract:

Pluralism is potential to explain why small groups within a larger society maintain their unique cultural identities. However this issue is relatively under explored. This paper aims to address how pluralism in Indonesia is discussed in social media. The data for this study are retrieved from a number of resources which discuss the issue of pluralism in contemporary Indonesia in media. The analysis and the interpretation of the data refer to the Theory of Register put forward in Systemic Functional Linguistics perspectives. Findings and discussion suggest that the existence of multiple cultural traditions within a single country is in pro and con. It is arguable why the idea that several values may be equally correct and yet in conflict with each other.

Keywords: *conflict, discourse, field, pluralism, threat*

1. Introduction

Pluralism refers to a diversity of views instead of a single approach. Philosophically, it means the acknowledgment of political systems diversity. It indicates that power of centers should be diverse in society. Pluralist democracy therefore means a political system the power center of is more than one. All religious paths should be considered equally valid and their coexistence should be acceptable.

A study conducted by Crouch (2015) on legal pluralism suggests that fatwa may influence a legal process. It could be used to justify allegations of blasphemy. When it deals with a case of insulting religion it could also be used to support prosecutor's argument. Differences in religious principles have made secular state courts involved in negotiations and reconciliation.

This paper intends to discuss how pluralism in contemporary Indonesia is perceived by public at large in media.

2. Method

The objective of this study is to reveal and describe the field of discourse on pluralism in contemporary Indonesia. The data for this study are retrieved from a number of resources which discuss the issue of pluralism in contemporary Indonesia in media. The analysis and the interpretation of the data refer to the Theory of Register put forward in Systemic Functional Linguistics perspectives. First, the data collected was initially identified in terms of the processes involved in the texts. It includes process of material, mental, verbal, behavioral, relational, existential. In addition, circumstance of duration, distance, time, place, means, quality, comparison, reason, purpose and behalf in the texts were explored and quantified. Second, the analysis of the Field of discourse found in the texts were conducted and discussed by critically scrutinizing the issues addressed in every one of it.

3. Findings and Discussion

Analysis of the data includes the grammar of ideational meanings of the texts and the field of discourse on the issues addressed. Interpretation on the findings is based on analysis result of the system of Transitivity and the Field of discourse found in the data.

3.1. The Grammar of Ideational Meaning

The grammar of ideational meaning the texts is presented in Table 1 (See also Appendix).

Process \ Texts	Text # 1	Text #2	Text # 3	Text # 4	Text # 5	Total
Material Process	7	24	37	47	42	152
Mental Process	1	2	1	14	7	25
Verbal Process	3	11	0	12	13	39
Behavioral Process	0	0	1	0	0	1
Relational Process	5	3	12	13	8	41
Existential Process	3	1	0	1	0	5
Circumstances	13	9	38	52	28	140
Total	32	50	89	139	98	403

Table 1: The grammar of ideational meaning

As the data show all the authors use all the processes and circumstances in realizing their meanings on the issue of pluralism. Material process takes the biggest number (152) of the transitivity system. The rest includes relational process (41), verbal process (39), mental process (25), existential process (5), and behavioral process (1). Meanwhile the data reveal that 140 circumstances have been used to realize the texts.

It indicates that the texts are primarily focused on the process of doing. They have made real and concrete tangible actions. In other words, it suggests that the entities involved the action of doing something and undertaking it. A measurable concern has been shown by the use of significant number of relational process. It means that the texts cover the intention to define and to identify phenomena. The use of significant number of verbal process indicates that verbal action is the concern of the texts. All the synonymous verbs of 'saying' are used to make sense of the texts. Mental process is not less important to realize the meanings in the texts. It means that the author also talk about what they feel and think. The behavioral process appeared in the text indicates that it concerns with action to be experienced. A conscious being is involved to make it happens.

Adverbial groups and prepositional phrases are made use in Circumstances that appear in the texts. Not only that they occur with material process, the circumstances can occur with all types of process. It means that the issues such as duration, distance, time, place, means, quality, comparison, reason, purpose and behalf are addressed in the texts.

3.2. Field

The context of situation of the texts under investigation includes what the issue being discussed is (Field), the power relation of participants involved in the discourse (Tenor), and the way the issues is organized linguistically (Mode).

The issues addressed in this discourse are reflected in a number of public opinions on pluralism summarized in Table 2.

Texts	Content
Text # 1	Muslim democracy as a model has frequently included Indonesia. Although most of its population is Moslem secular government has been adopted since its independence. Freedom of religion is depicted in the constitution of the country and official faiths such as Christian, Hindu and Buddha are recognized. However, discrimination and allegations at the expense of minorities groups recently has made such a positive image in peril. For instance, Jakarta's governor was accused of insulting Islam. Islamic groups' ideology was suppressed under the regime of New Order. Now the groups use the new-found freedom to advocate their views. They insisted Islamic practice based on rigid interpretation is implemented in the country.
Text # 2	Rising intolerance in Indonesia recently has made minorities increasingly fearful and the tradition of religious pluralism in the country is under the threat. Radical Islamism has influenced society and politics in the country. Charges of blasphemy that sentenced the former Jakarta governor for two years are perceived by civil society and many religious minorities as religious intolerance. It is believed that blasphemy law adopted by the country can be utilized to justify hate speech and intolerance. The climate of fear among minorities caused by the rising religious intolerance is apparent. Due to the fact, international community is urged to cease describe Indonesia a model of tolerance. Countering extremism and strengthening pluralism are the keywords to face the dangers following voices of moderation courageously made by civil society to protect Indonesia from the threat of destroying the pluralism tradition.
Text # 3	Bitter aftertaste has been left by Jakarta gubernatorial election recently leaving possible consequences on Indonesia political landscape. Exploitation of religion and race issues has made the election billed as the ugliest and most polarizing one. Jakarta voters have been forced to decide if a non-Moslem is allowed to govern the city. Diversity in unity Indonesians are proud of is in serious jeopardy if no one stops the racism and religious bigotry from lingering on and spreading further. Islam and nationalism might be combined by Presiden Joko Widodo' effort following Presiden Soekarno's cue in combining several ideologies to peacefully live and exist.

Text # 4	Conversation about Islam lately has seen the losing ground of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah although these two organizations count one third of the nation's population. Islamic political parties that had raucously voiced their interest not to mention hardline groups that confrontationally did the same thing had squeezed Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah out of the picture. It is worried that pluralism and tolerance are no longer be the brand of the nation. What Islam stands for had been defined by political parties and radical groups by attacking what they perceive deviant practices. It is said that the order has changed. A greater weight has been taken by political parties and louder voices have been made by radical groups. Audience seemed to hear it easily, attracted and remember better. Meanwhile the boundaries of the two largest Muslim groups are likely to be pushed as the political parties and radical groups set the pace. An anti-pornography law was lobbied for and Ahmadiyah religious minorities was attacked.
Text # 5	Radical Muslims in Indonesia are increasingly targeting religious minorities such as Ahmadi, Christians and Shia Muslims. The capital was shut down with mass demonstrations before the governor was toppled down dramatically. It has spread fears nationwide for extremism in the diverse nation. Ahok's two years imprisonment for religious blasphemy charge demonstrates the hardliner rising influence at the expense of minority communities. There have been almost 100 cases of blasphemy brought to the court and Ahok's case is the most high-profile one in Indonesia history. Although the laws had been introduced in 1965, 89 cases with extremely high conviction rates took place in the democratic era following the fall of New Order regime.

Table 2: The Field of Discourse on Pluralism

The field of discourse on the issue of pluralism in contemporary Indonesia illustrated above share the common concern that pluralism in the country is now in peril. Discrimination and allegations at the expense of minorities groups recently have sparked fear of the damage of pluralism in the country. Radical Islamism has influenced society and politics in the country. Charges of blasphemy that sentenced the former Jakarta governor for two years are perceived by civil society and many religious minorities as religious intolerance. It is believed that blasphemy law adopted by the country can be utilized to justify hate speech and intolerance. Countering extremism and strengthening pluralism are the keywords to face the dangers following voices of moderation courageously made by civil society to protect Indonesia from the threat of destroying the pluralism tradition. Bitter aftertaste has been left by Jakarta gubernatorial election recently leaving possible consequences on Indonesia political landscape. Exploitation of religion and race issues has made the election billed as the ugliest and most polarizing one. Jakarta voters have been forced to decide if a non-Moslem is allowed to govern the city. Islamic political parties that had raucously voiced their interest not to mention hardline groups that confrontationally did the same thing had squeezed Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah out of the picture. Radical Muslims in Indonesia are increasingly targeting religious minorities such as Ahmadi, Christians and Shia Muslims. There have been almost 100 cases of blasphemy brought to the court and Ahok's case is the most high-profile one in Indonesia history.

4. Discussion

To make sense of a text properly systemic functional linguistics perspectives suggest that analysis on the Field of the discourse can be combined simultaneously with analyses on the Tenor and the Mode of the discourse. Analysis on the Tenor of the discourse deals with the relationship of the participants involved in the texts. It explores the power relation among the participants. Whereas analysis on the Mode of the discourse concerns with the channels used by the texts that is whether it is spoken or written one. It is therefore deals with the role the language plays in the text.

4.1. Tenor

The data suggests that the participants in Text # 1 involve radical Muslim, Christian, Buddhist and Presiden Joko Widodo. The power relationship among these participants is unequal with Muslim as the majority whereas Christian, Hindu and Budhist are minorities. The fact that 90 percent of 250 million of Indonesia people are Muslim makes it obvious that the country is dominated by Muslim with power that can be sensitive in case minorities ignore it. The text also indicates that such sensitivity can be made use for political interest such as the campaign to win the position of the governor of the capital. In fact, every word uttered by a minority member can be manipulated by the radical groups in such a way that eventually mislead the mass.

Although Christian, Hindu and Budhist are minorities they are dominant in the eastern part of Indonesia such Bali, Nusa Tenggara Barat and Nusa Tenggara Timur, Sulawesi and Papua. They will be happy to establish a new country in case that Indonesia is declared to be an Islamic country as radical Muslim groups demanded. This makes Presiden Joko Widodo concerned with. The diversity in unity is the principle of the republic committed by the founding fathers of the nation that Presiden Joko Widodo should preserve at any cost. It is likely that the Presiden is capable to make it balance in terms of power relation against the radical groups when he banned one of the radical groups recently.

Text # 2 includes members of the Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), Ahmadiyah, Shiah groups and Indonesian government as participants. The power relation between these civil societies and the state is relatively equal as the UK-based organization put pressure on the Indonesian government to review blasphemy law which has put pluralism in peril. Another issue concerning the decree of anti-Ahmadiyah is also required to be addressed. In addition, CSW appeals international community and invites UN rapporteur to visit the country to address the issue of religious freedom,

The participants involved in Text # 3 are Basuki Tjahja Purnama (Ahok), Anies Baswedan, the late Presiden Soekarno and Presiden Joko Widodo. The power relation between Ahok and Anies is likely unequal with the latter supported by radical Muslim groups whereas the former is a member of a minority group. Religion and race have been exploited to stop the reelection of Governor Basuki. Meanwhile, the power relation between the late Presiden Soekarno and Presiden Joko Widodo is likely equal as indicated by the former's effort to unite different ideologies of the nation and the latter's attempt in campaigning to stop the rise of Islamism and to preserve unity.

The power relation among participants in Text # 4 that involve Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, PKS, Hizbut Tahrir, and FPI is likely unequal. As the largest Muslim groups, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah seemed to lose their ground in the shaping of conversation on Islam viz-a-viz PKS, Hizbut Tahrir and FPI. These political party and radical groups have pushed the boundaries to make sense of what Islam is. PKS, for example, has lobbied anti-pornography law whereas FPI and Hizbut Tahrir have attacked religious minorities including Ahmadiyah sect.

Text # 5 participants include Christian NGO, Ahmadiyah community and Moderate Muslim. The power relation among these participants is equal with their common support for interfaith organization to promote harmony as well as tolerance. One of their actions is to advance Gus Dur's humanitarian vision.

4.2. Mode

The Mode of discourse found in Text # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 suggests that the texts are realized in written form. Written language is different from spoken language because they serve different functions. Unlike spoken which is context dependent, written language tends to be more independent of its immediate context. As the texts under investigation show, early writing tends to be oriented towards goods and services such as law, codes of behavior and transaction. Meanwhile, artistic functions originated in the spoken language and were only later written down. Thus, written language is not simply speech written down.

As the data show the continuum suggests that in most written form the language is used as reflection and therefore the language is as a product (synoptic) whereas in most spoken form the language is used in action and therefore it is as a process (dynamic). Unlike spoken form the features of which are realized in turn taking organization, interactive staging and open ended written form is realized in monologic organization, rhetoric staging and closed finite. The written language is final draft and polished where indication of earlier draft has been removed whereas the spoken language deals with spontaneous phenomena where false start and hesitation are frequently occurring.

Everyday lexis and non-standard grammar can be found in spoken language with grammatical complexity and lexically sparse whereas written language prestige lexis and grammatically standard with lexically dense and simplicity in grammar. In spoken language meanings are recovered by context and not everything should be explicitly stated. Stating everything may result in over explicitness, thus, unnatural and the language choice depends on context of situation. Meanwhile, as the texts show, in written language meanings and context are created and presented by writers. Everything should be presented for clarity and completeness is necessary. The language choice of written language is based on the imagined readers.

4.3. Context of Culture

Apart from context of situation in making meanings we should also pay attention to the context of culture. Context of culture refers to the text types (genre) we use when we express something. It includes texts of procedure text, recount text, narrative text, descriptive text, explanation text, discussion text, news items text, exposition text, review text, etc.

Considering the structure, Text # 1 and Text # 2 can be categorized into information report. It contains facts about the subject, a description and information on its parts, behavior and qualities. The goal of such a text is to present information about a subject. Text # 3 aims at persuading the readers by presenting one side of an argument. The structure includes introductory statement followed by a series of arguments and ended up by a conclusion. It can introduce a short description as well as definition followed by subject features and summary of the information.

Text # 4 can also be categorized into exposition text. The language features include the use of words showing the writer's attitude, words that express feelings and words that relate cause and effect. Meanwhile Text # 5 can be categorized into news item text that presents the lead, the description of the events, the resource of the news, and the background knowledge of the news.

4.4. Ideology

A higher level of context we should pay attention is the level of ideology. Whatever the context of situation and whatever the context of culture it is our use of language will be influenced by our ideological position, that is the value we hold consciously or unconsciously and biases and perspectives we adopt.

The ideology of Text # 1 suggests the value held in Indonesia that although the majority of the population is Muslim other religions are respected and therefore the country has secular government. However there has been a growing fear among minorities in the country lately due to radicalism that is believed to be a threat for pluralism of the nation. The perspectives adopted so far is that democracy, tolerance as well as moderation and Islam proved can be compatible in Indonesia.

Text # 2 indicates an ideological battle ground. The value of religion tolerance has been under the threat of the blasphemy law held in the country. It is perceived that intolerance as well as hate speech can be justified by the blasphemy law applied nationwide. The perspective adopted in the text includes the appeal to review the blasphemy law to protect pluralism in country.

The ideological influence of the Field can be found in Text # 3 which suggests a value held consciously or unconsciously that non-Muslim is not allowed to govern. However, this text also presents a perspective adopted by the nation which suggests that diverse religious as well as ethnic groups can coexist peacefully.

Text # 4 implies ideological position that the brand of tolerance and pluralism should be preserved by the nation. These values are likely under severe threat recently with the rising demand of radical Muslim groups to change Indonesia from secular to Islamic state. The perspective adopted in the text includes the belief that moderate Muslim groups such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah can play their role more effectively to preserve pluralism in the country.

The value held in Text # 5 suggests that outlawing religious teaching can be used to ban a religious group deemed to be deviant as in the case of Ahmadiyah sect. However, the ideological battle ground also acknowledges a perspective that interfaith initiatives can promote harmony and tolerance in the country.

5. Conclusion

This study suggests that discourse on pluralism in contemporary Indonesia is realized through a number of texts in the media. Five texts under this investigation involve all types of process in transitivity system such as material, mental, verbal, behavioral, relational and existential. The texts also concern with circumstance of time, place, duration, distance, means, quality, comparison, reason, purpose and behalf. The texts share a common concern that pluralism in Indonesia are in peril at present following radicalism that rise lately. The ideological influence of the Field suggests that the values held consciously or unconsciously by the nation is living and coexisting peacefully as a nation which consists of diverse religion and race. The perspectives presented therefore suggest that pluralism should be preserved for the sake of unity. Pedagogically, it implies that language learning should consider not only the skill of how to be good at how to say on something but also how to be good at what to say it.

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