

# A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: BLASPHEMY PORTRAYED IN AHOK'S SPEECH

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## A B S T R A C T

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**N**owadays, blasphemy becomes a controversial issue among Indonesian society. This phenomenon can be seen through the speech of one of the governor candidates in Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. Basuki or the one who is usually called as Ahok said in his political campaign speech that Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 is a lie. This speech exactly triggered anger toward the society that Ahok insulted Islam and Muslims. The dispute regarding this speech keeps going on among society. Most of society as Muslims considered this speech as a blasphemy. Viewing this severe case, the researchers investigate whether blasphemy contained in Ahok's speech or not. Moreover, this study is conducted to interpret the intended message behind his speech. This study uses a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) proposed by Fairclough on his theory about the relation between a text and interaction on the news of Ahok's blasphemy (1989). The data are taken from several credible online newspapers like Kompas.com and Detik.com, therefore the quality of the data is trustable.

**KEYWORDS :** Blasphemy, Ahok's speech, interpretation.

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

This study tries to seek the truth whether Ahok's speech contains of blasphemy or not by using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This study gives a comprehensive analysis on the relation between the content of Ahok's speech and interaction on the news of Ahok's blasphemy.

General Election Commission announced in 2016 that there would be three candidates of the next Jakarta's Governor. Those candidates were Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, Anies Rasyid Baswedan. The three candidates delivered their speeches in the political campaign. They conveyed their vision and mission to be the Jakarta's Governor. Some incoming plans to yield a better capital city of Indonesia, Jakarta, were pointed out in order to convince the society to choose them. Startlingly, one of the Jakarta's Governor Candidates, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok), delivered the most shocking and controversial speech.

It was on 27th September 2016, Ahok visited Kepulauan Seribu. He delivered his controversial speech which insulted Islam on Quranic verse Al Maidah 51. He stated that the society could not choose him as a leader because of lied by Quranic verse Al Maidah 51. This speech exactly triggered anger to society, especially Muslims in Indonesia. Therefore, the society considered Ahok's statement as a blasphemy. He did any insult or mocking toward a holy Quran and Islam. That is why this case became so problematic and crucial. The issue brought by Basuki "Ahok" Purnama creates pros and cons among Indonesian society. This speech contained of offensive statement. Therefore, some chaos happened among society which were expressed by three million people through protests and demonstrations in MONAS (National Monument).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is applied in this study in order to reveal the intended message lies behind the Ahok's speech, whether it contains of blasphemy or not. Moreover, this study is supported by Fairclough theory.

## METHODOLOGY

This study is sort of normative study which applies Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in order to convey the process of interpreting the text script of Ahok's speech by using the theory of Fairclough. CDA is an interdisciplinary approach which views language as a form of social practice which is implemented to the study of discourse. The text script was taken from the original version video on Youtube. The researchers implement reading process as the process of data gathering. In this study, skimming is a vital technique of reading process, because through skimming specific information can be obtained.

This study examines the elements of blasphemous words portrayed in Ahok's speech through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). From the data source, the researchers analyze and investigate on three stages of critical discourse analysis; 1. description of text, 2. interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction, and 3. explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context (Fairclough, 1989:109).

Fairclough stated that the set of formal features we find in a specific text can be regarded as particular choices from among the options (e.g. of vocabulary or grammar) available in the discourse types which the text draws

upon. Moreover, Fairclough reveals that in order to interpret the features which are actually present in a text, it is generally necessary to take account of what other choices have been made, i.e. of the systems of options in the discourse types which actual features come from. As the consequence, in analyzing texts, one's focus is constantly alternating between what is 'there' in the text, and the discourse type(s) which the text is drawing upon (Fairclough, 1989: 110). Thus, description needs to be complemented with interpretation and explanation if one's concern is with the social values associated with texts and their elements.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this part, the researchers investigate whether the content of Ahok's speech contained of blasphemy or not by using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on Fairclough theory. The researchers find out that the controversial sentence that indicates blasphemy in Ahok's speech is "Jadi jangan percaya sama orang, kan bisa saja dalam hati kecil bapak ibu nggak bisa pilih saya ya kan? dibohongi Surat Al-Maidah 51, macam-macam itu." The bold part becomes the core dispute among society. However, after examining through some trustable sources such as Kompas.com and Detik.com, the researchers find that the debatable sentence in Ahok's speech has eventually been edited by Buni Yani. The original version of Ahok's speech is taken from video which has duration 21 minutes 32 seconds on Youtube. The original text script is that "dibohongi pakai Surat Al Maidah 51." However, the word "pakai" is erased by Buni Yani before uploading the video to Youtube.

In CDA, there are three stages that must be analyzed to interpret the text script of Ahok's speech; description, interpretation and explanation of a text. Description of a text means describing how a text is constructed in terms of grammar, vocabulary and textual structures which finally affects toward its meaning. Meanwhile, interpretation of a text deals with the relationship between a text and interaction. Explanation of a text deals with the reaction and social context.

## 1. Description of a text

According to Norman Fairclough, there are three types of value that formal features may have: experiential, relational, and expressive. It is listed below:

Table. 1 Formal features: experiential, relations and subjects values.

Dimensions of meaning	Values of features	Structural effects
Contents	Experiential	Knowledge/belief
Relations	Relational	Social relations
Subjects	Expressive	Social identities

### a. What experiential value do grammatical features have?

The experiential aspects of grammar have to do with the ways in which the grammatical forms of a language code happenings or relationships in the world, the people or animals or things involved in those happenings or relationships, and their spatial and temporal circumstances, manner of occurrence, and so on. (Fairclough, 1989: 120). The question below deals with more specific related issues.

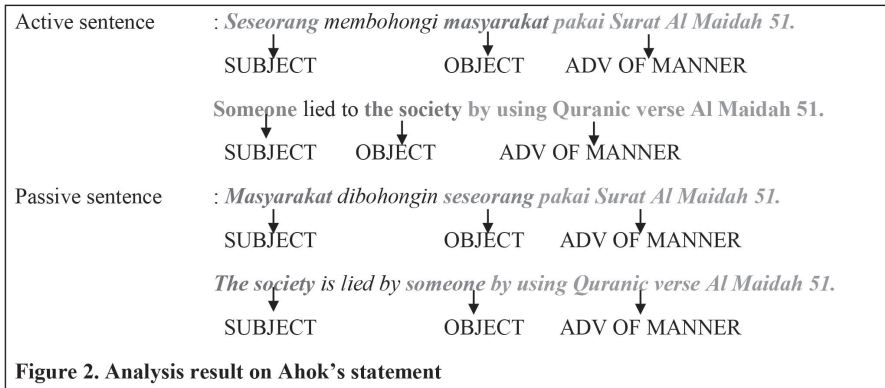
### b. Are sentences active or passive?

Passive sentence	:	( <u>          </u> )	<i>dibohongin pakai Surat Al Maidah 51.</i>
		↓	↓
		SUBJECT?	ADV OF MANNER
		( <u>          </u> )	lied by using Quranic verse Al Maidah 51.
		↓	↓
		SUBJECT?	ADV OF MANNER

Figure 1. Ahok's statement in his speech.

“dibohongin pakai Surat Al Maidah 51” (“lied by using Quranic verse Al Maidah 51”) is a passive sentence. The prefix “di-” indicates passive sentence. It illustrates that there is a subject which is omitted. Based on Fairclough theory, it is possible in each case to delete the agent phrase to get agentless passive sentence. Agentless passives again leave causality and agency unclear.

Figure 2. Analysis result on Ahok's statement

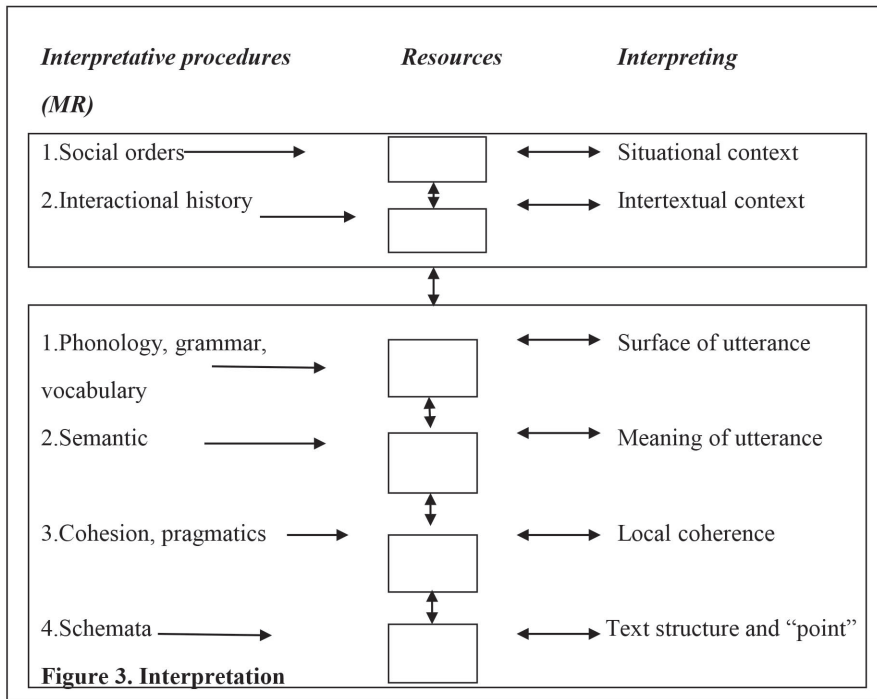


From the previous statement “Jadi jangan percaya sama orang, kan bisa saja dalam hati kecil bapak ibu nggak bisa pilih saya ya kan? dibohongi pakai Surat Al-Maidah 51, macam-macam itu.” The researchers found that the omitted subject refers to the politician who uses Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 as a medium to lie to the society. The words “bapak ibu” represent the society as the one who is addressed by the politician to be lied. For the further extent, the word “pakai” has a function as an adverb of manner. Therefore, Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 is as the object of the adverb of manner “pakai”. Consequently, it does not mean that Quranic verse Al Maidah is a lie, because the sentence is passive and there is a word that exhibits an adverb of manner which has a function as a medium of “lie”. This demonstrates that Ahok’s speech does not contain of blasphemy, because the Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 is not in the position as a subject.

In contrast, it will be different if we delete the word “pakai”. The statement “dibohongin Surat Al Maidah 51” will lead into different understanding; Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 is a lie. This understanding is widely-spread among society. That is why, the word “pakai” is significant toward meaning of this sentence. Hence, grammatical feature (active or passive sentence) includes to the dimensions of meaning in contents which has an experiential value which affects toward the society’s belief or knowledge (Table.1).

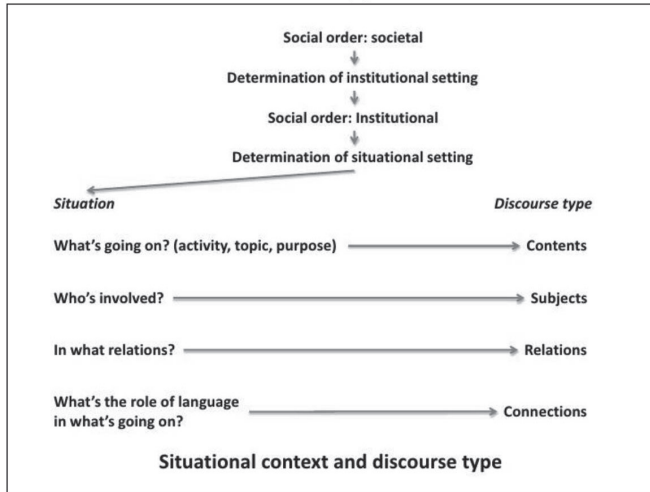
## 2. Interpretation of text

Figure 3. Interpretation



The figure 3 gives a summary about the process of interpreting a text. There are six major domains of interpretation. The two in the upper section of diagram relate to the interpretation of context, meanwhile in the lower section relate to four levels of the interpretation of text. In the left-hand column (Interpretative procedures (MR)) are listed major elements of MR which function as interpretative procedures. Each element of MR is specifically associated with the level of interpretation which occurs on the same line of the diagram. The central column identifies the range of Resources which are drawn upon for each of the domains of interpretation on the right. It includes more than the interpretative procedure on the left: there are three or four “inputs” to each “box”. (Fairclough, 1989: 142)

## b. Situational context and discourse type



### 1. “What’s going on?”

This is the main dimension of situation. In this dimension, there are three subdivisions; activity, topic, purpose. Activity enables us to identify a situation that is one of a set of activity types which are parts of social order in a particular institution. Meanwhile, topic is interrelated with the activity which is done. Purpose is also associated with the activity types. Hence, before interpreting a text, it is essential to understand the situational context which considers activity, topic and purpose in a certain discourse. Here are the analysis of the situational context of the first dimension “What’s going on?” on Ahok’s speech which was done on September 27th, 2016 that the researchers got after watching the original video version on Youtube:

**Activity** : Visiting *Kepulauan Seribu*.

**Topic** : Talking about the cultivation program of grouper fish.

**Purpose** : Watching his working programs as The Jakarta’s Governor in 2016.

From the analysis above, it portrays that Ahok did not have any intention to insult Islam and Muslims. It is clear that the coming of Ahok in Kepulauan Seribu was not to do political campaign regarding the election of the next Jakarta’s Governor of 2017, yet the core goal is to watch his working programs. For the further extent, the researchers found that from the discourse type, content, the focus of Ahok’s speech is merely talking about his working programs, the plans to develop the cultivation program of grouper fish, the plans to create a

tourism destination in Kepulauan Seribu, and others. Moreover, a linguist from Unika Atma Jaya, Bambang Kaswanti Purwo, noted that those utterances are counted reaching 2897 words. However, Ahok's statement regarding Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 had been delivered only once. This demonstrates that the main focus of Ahok's speech was solely discussing about his working programs. He did not have any intention to do blasphemy toward Islam and Muslims. It is proven through the comparison of the amount of words he talked between his plans and his statement of Al Maidah 51. Moreover, the researchers did not find any repetitions of Ahok's statement on Quranic verse Al Maidah 51. Therefore, viewing from the situational context, there is no any element of blasphemous words portrayed in Ahok's speech.

## 2. *"Who's involved?"*

This is the second dimension in interpreting the situational context of a text. This question refers to which subject positions are set up. The subject positions are derived from the activity type. In this case, the activity type is a visit to Kepulauan Seribu which has subject positions for the host (the society) and the guest (Ahok). Next, subject positions represent institution from social identities to the subjects who function within it, in this context means The Jakarta's Governor (Ahok) and the society of Kepulauan Seribu. The last is that subject positions are associated with speaking and listening positions such as speaker, addressee, hearer. In this case, there are speaker and hearers role alternating between Ahok and society.

## 3. *"In what relation?"*

Conversing about relation, it is associated with the dynamic of subject positions in terms of what relationships of power. This part would concern with the nature of relationship between The Jakarta's Governor and the society. In this context, Ahok tends to be more powerful to the society, because Ahok has a position as The Governor of Jakarta, therefore he has a power and authority to observe the progress of his working programs in Kepulauan Seribu and to control the society. The society is only a part of public members who should obey the regulation of Ahok, The Capital City's Governor.

## 4. *"What's the role of language?"*

In this case, language is being used as a medium to convey information regarding the working programs of The Jakarta's Governor, Ahok. The role of language in this case is really significant to give knowledge and understanding toward the society on the importance in developing the natural resources which are had by Kepulauan Seribu such as the beautiful island which is full



of grouper fish, and others. The natural resources in Kepulauan Seribu have not been utilized maximally by the society because of the lack of society's knowledge in developing the natural resources. Hence, the speech which was delivered by Ahok plays a significant role toward the development of Kepulauan Seribu.

**c. The Levels of Interpretation:**

1. Surface of utterance. In this level, the interpreters need to interpret a text by relating to some aspects of language such as phonology, grammar and vocabulary. This is the basic level of a text interpretation before coming at the complex ones. In this case, the researchers found that in terms of grammar, it has been discussed in description of text that concerns on whether a sentence is active or passive. The researchers reveal that the sentence is passive and there is a word that exhibits an adverb of manner "pakai" which has a function as a medium of "lie". This demonstrates that Ahok's speech does not contain of blasphemy, because the Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 is not in the position as a subject.
2. Meaning of utterance. This is the second level of interpretation which relates to semantics and pragmatics. In this part, the interpreters need to combine word-meanings and grammatical information and work out implicit meanings to gain the whole meanings in a text. The researchers found that there is an intended meaning lies behind Ahok's statements on "Jadi jangan percaya sama orang, kan bisa saja dalam hati kecil bapak ibu nggak bisa pilih saya ya kan? dibohongi pakai Surat Al-Maidah 51, macam-macam itu. Itu hak bapak-ibu ya. Jadi kalau bapak-ibu perasaan nggak bisa kepilih nih, karena saya takut masuk neraka karena dibodohin gitu ya, nggak apa-apa" Viewing from the pragmatic concept, what Ahok actually was trying to say is that the society should be wary toward a politician who uses Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 as a medium to deceive the society not to choose a leader who is Non-Muslim. Hence, Ahok did not make his own interpretation toward Quranic verse Al Maidah 51, yet he criticized toward a politician.
3. Local coherence. This level concerns with the meaning connections between utterances, producing coherent interpretations of pairs and sequences of them. It deals with cohesion. The meaning connections among sentences are interrelated. Those talks about the cultivation program of grouper fish. Meanwhile, Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 was only a spontaneous emotion when he remembered about a politician who lied toward society by using it.

4. Text structure and “point”. This is the last level which concerns on working out how a whole text hangs together. As what is explained in situational context, the focus of Ahok’s speech is merely talking about his working programs, the plans to develop the cultivation program of grouper fish, the plans to create a tourism destination in Kepulauan Seribu, and others. Those utterances are counted reaching 2897 words. However, Ahok’s statement regarding Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 had been delivered only once. This demonstrates that the main focus of Ahok’s speech was solely discussing about his working programs.

### 3. Explanation of a text

Explanation of a text deals with the relationship between interaction and social context. Here are some questions which can measure how a discourse has reached explanation level.

1. Social determinants: what power relations at situational, institutional and societal levels help shape this discourse?

The power relation is that Ahok has a position as The Governor of Jakarta, therefore he has a power and authority to observe the progress of his working programs in Kepulauan Seribu and to control the society. The society is only a part of public members who should obey the regulation of Ahok, The Capital City’s Governor.

2. Effects: Does the discourse contribute to sustaining existing power relations, or transforming them?

The discourse contribute to sustaining existing power relations because based on the interview video toward the society of Kepulauan Seribu on Youtube, they said that they do not feel offended at all on Ahok’s speech. Moreover, at the moment when Ahok delivered his speech, there were not any wrong reactions coming from the society. They responded it just the way it was. They thought that there was nothing wrong with Ahok’s speech. Even, they respected the hard work of Ahok as The Jakarta’s Governor who brings any changes toward Kepulauan Seribu. Hence, it demonstrates that it maintains the power relations. From the reaction of society who do not feel offended at all on Ahok’s speech, meaning that Ahok’s speech does not contain of blasphemy.

## CONCLUSION

For the last highlight, this study is conducted to examine whether Ahok’s speech contains of blasphemy or not by using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). According to Norman Fairclough, there are three stages that must be passed

to interpret a text; 1. description of a text, 2. interpretation and 3. explanation of a text. These three steps are really significant to shape the comprehensive interpretation of a text. The researchers found that Ahok's speech does not contain of any blasphemy elements because in the description of a text, it portrays that the statement of Ahok "dibohongin pakai Surat Al Maidah 51" is passive sentence which means that there is omitted subject. However, actually the agency should be clear. Therefore, Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 does not play as the subject of the sentence. As the result, Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 is not a lie, yet it is the object of adverb of manner "pakai". Moreover, in the interpretation of text, the researchers revealed that the main focus of the speech is talking about cultivation program of grouper fish, the plans to create a tourism destination in Kepulauan Seribu, hence Quranic verse Al Maidah 51 is only a spontaneous emotion to criticize a politician who deceive the society not to choose Non-Muslim leader. Furthermore, the explanation stage puzzles out that the position of Ahok as The Jakarta's Governor holds a power relation which helps to shape the discourse. Moreover, the discourse also helps to maintain the power relation. It is proven through the reaction of society in responding the blasphemy news of Ahok's speech. They who attended the event on 27th September 2016 did not feel offended when Ahok delivered his speech regarding Quranic verse Al Maidah 51. There was not wrong reaction expressed by them. After analyzing each step in interpreting Ahok's speech, the researchers conclude that there is not blasphemy portrayed in Ahok's speech. Finally, the researchers do hope that other researchers would elaborate this finding to other media or other issues by using Fairclough theory.

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