

## **An Analysis of Al-Qur'an Language as a Mediator for Politicization of Religion in Indonesia**

*Analisa Bahasa Al-Qur'an sebagai Mediator Politisasi Agama di Indonesia*

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### **Abstract**

This study is conducted to comprehend the politicization of religion typology based on the use of Al-Qur'an language on the narrative of the power struggle in Indonesia. The politicization of religion is a widespread phenomenon among Indonesian people. Some political events in Indonesia cannot be separated from religious symbols, for example, conveying Al-Qur'an theorems to spread political agendas. Al-Qur'an, its communicative language characteristics, is frequently used as a mediator to spread particular narratives for power. This study uses a qualitative approach by gathering contents or narratives related to Al-Qur'an verses for a political power struggle in Indonesia. This study uses the linguistic method to see how the discourses of Al-Qur'an as a language of religion become a tool to build a social identity related to politics. The result of this study shows that Al-Qur'an can be a mediator in the spread of political narratives. Besides, the characteristics of the Al-Qur'an language, which tend to have communicative feel, can potentially be used as a political communication tool. This study has a contribution toward the development of politicization of religion typology through the Al-Qur'an language. Al-Qur'an and its user have a connection with various discourses and debates in particular contexts. Therefore, to comprehend an interpretation, it is essential to see the context and society's need when analyzing a text.

**Keywords:** Al-Qur'an language, language, and power, linguistic, politicization of religion

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami tipologi politisasi agama berdasarkan penggunaan bahasa Al-Qur'an dalam narasi perebutan kekuasaan di Indonesia. Politisasi agama merupakan fenomena yang sedang populer dikalangan masyarakat Indonesia. Hal ini dapat dilihat pada beberapa perhelatan politik Indonesia yang tidak lepas dari penggunaan simbol agama seperti penyampaian dalil Al-Qur'an untuk melancarkan agenda politik. Al-Qur'an dengan karakteristik bahasanya yang komunikatif tidak jarang digunakan sebagai mediator untuk menyebarkan narasi-narasi tertentu dengan tujuan kekuasaan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan mengumpulkan konteks-konten atau narasi terkait dengan penggunaan ayat Al-Qur'an dalam perebutan kekuasaan di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode linguistik untuk melihat bagaimana wacana Al-Qur'an sebagai bahasa agama dijadikan sebagai alat untuk membangun sebuah identitas sosial yang berhubungan dengan politik. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Al-Qur'an mampu menjadi mediator dalam menyebarkan narasi-narasi politik. hal ini terlihat pada bentuk-bentuk penggunaan ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an dalam perebutan kekuasaan di Indonesia. disamping itu karakteristik bahasa Al-Qur'an yang cenderung memiliki nuansa komunikatif juga berpotensi untuk digunakan sebagai alat komunikasi politik. Penelitian ini memiliki kontribusi terhadap pengembangan tipologi politisasi agama melalui



Bahasa Al-Qur'an. Al-Qur'an dan penggunaannya memiliki keterkaitan dengan berbagai wacana dan perdebatan dalam konteks tertentu. Sehingga dalam memahami penafsiran penting untuk melihat konteks dan kebutuhan masyarakat ketika menganalisa teks.

**Kata kunci:** bahasa Al-Qur'an, bahasa dan kekuasaan, linguistik, politisasi agama

## Introduction

Al-Qur'an language is one of Al-Qur'an miracles. Al-Qur'an language is considered to have dialectical characteristic, communicative, has unique style of language, fluency, and has incredible beauty. There are some opinions from Muslim cleric about Al-Qur'an's miracle, but most clerics think that Al-Qur'an miracles exist in the orderliness and interpretation validity, as well as the language aspect <sup>1</sup>. The abundancy of Al-Qur'an miracles both in language and interpretation aspect, makes Al-Qur'an relevant in various places and times. However, that relevancy is used by some people and they use Al-Qur'an verses and language for particular purposes, one of them is to raise electoral during election times in our country. That moment sometimes happens in General Election of The House of Representatives, Presidential Election, Local Leader Election, and even in Village Head Election.

This phenomenon is commonly known as politicization of religion. It has been happened since many times ago until now. During new order period, the campaign leader of a political party did black campaign so people will not choose another political party by using sa part of Al-Qur'an verse. The verse being used in the campaign is verse 35 of Al-Baqarah.

Do not approach this tree, for then you will be of the wrong-doers  
(the unjust, the transgressors).

That verse is used by a campaign leader so people will not come closer or choose a political party with tree symbol, because when people come closer, they will be categorized as *unjust*.

A phenomenon about politicization of religion which is widely spoken in Indonesia is the case of a local leader candidate, a non-Muslim who commented on the use of verse 51 of Al-Maidah in general election event. This case brought responses and reactions both from common society and particular society, started from responses with scientific approach in the form of interpretation from original source, made of interpretation works by well-known scholars, and also reactions with non-scientific approach in the form of blasphemy and swearing, and the event is specifically named *Al-Maidah 51 Case* <sup>2</sup>.

1 Muhammad bin Alawiy al-Malikiy al-Makkiy, *Zubdat Al-Itqan Fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'an* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1971), 151.

2 <http://news.detik.com/berita/d-3315203/soal-al-maidah-51-ahok-saya-tak-berniat->

To this date, studies about politicization of religion is limited to the variety of religion ideology used in the process of power struggle. Discussions about the variety of ideology in politics are discussed from historical aspect to the implementation on political phenomena in Indonesia, so politicization of religion is considered as a phenomenon that needs to be watched out. Role of religion character through Al-Qur'an language in building the phenomenon of politicization of religion tends to be ignored in previous studies. In line with this, there are three patterns that can be mapped in studies about politicization of religion. Firstly, studies about the history of politicization of religion which is specifically related to the use of religious elements in politics happened in classic era <sup>3</sup>. Secondly, studies that look at politicization of religion on ideology aspect, so the movement of politicization of religion needs to be watched out <sup>4</sup>. Thirdly, studies that explain various phenomena of politicization of religion happened in Indonesia <sup>5</sup>. From those three trends, there is no study that emphasizes Al-Qur'an language for its function as a mediator which can change the purpose of interpreting Al-Qur'an to be narrative tools of power struggle.

This essay is intended to fill in the deficiency of previous studies, by analyzing the use of Al-Qur'an as narratives of power struggle in Indonesia. In line with that, this essay shows the proofs of mediation function that lies inside Al-Qur'an language in spreading the narratives of power struggle. It can be seen from various use of Al-Qur'an language done by politicians in an effort of narratives about power struggle.

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[melecehkan-ayat-suci-alquran](#) dan Durie, Mark (November 2016). "Violent Protests in Indonesia Blow an Ill Will for Religious Tolerance". New English Review. Diakses tanggal 18 November 2016. Dan McBeth, John (8 November 2016). "Blasphemy probe rocks Indonesia's secular foundations". The National. Diakses tanggal 18 November 2016. Dan <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20170607190758-20-220158/penjara-ahok-dan-aliran-sampai-jauh-pemburu-penista-agama>

- 3 Sumanto Al Qurtuby, "Sejarah Politik Politisasi Agama Dan Dampaknya Di Indonesia," *MAARIF*, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v13i2.21>; Zakiya Darajat, "Probematika Agama Dan Negara: Perspektif Sejarah," *Buletin Al-Turas*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.15408/bat.v25i1.8682>; Tamyizul Ibad, "Sisi Kelam Sejarah (Politik) Islam," *Millah*, 2010, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.ed.khus.art13>.
- 4 Mohammad Shofan, "Politisasi Agama Di Ruang Publik: Ideologis Atau Politis?," *MAARIF*, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v13i2.17>; Ilyse R. Morgenstein Fuerst, "Making Moderate Islam : Sufism , Service , and the ' Ground Zero Mosque ,'" *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 2018; Siti Faridah and Jerico Mathias, "Politisasi Agama Pemecah Keutuhan Bangsa Dalam Pemilu," *Seminar Nasional Hukum Universitas Negeri Semarang*, 2018; Abdillah Halim, "Fatwa Dan Politisasi Agama (Analisis Wacana Penggunaan Fatwa Pada Pilkada DKI Jakarta)," *An-Nuha: Jurnal Kajian Islam, Pendidikan, Budaya & Sosial*, 2018; Mukhtar Mukhtar, "Politisasi Agama Versus Sekularisasi Politik Perdebatan Perjumpaan Agama Dengan Negara," *JISH: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah Dan Hukum*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.36915/jish.v3i1.15>; Akh. Muzakki, "Islamisme Dan Politisasi Agama Model PKS Dalam Pilpres 2009," *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 2014, <https://doi.org/10.15642/islamica.2010.5.1.61-76>.
- 5 Laksmi Rachmaria, "Melacak Keberadaan Ideologi Pada Film Cahaya Dari Timur: Beta Maluku," *ProTVF*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.24198/ptvf.v4i2.26283>; Siti. dan heryanto Murti, "Politik Identitas Agama (Studi Kasus Politisasi Agama Pada Pemilihan Bupati Morotai 2011)," *Jurnal Ilmiah Wabana Pendidikan Https:// Jurnal.Unibrab.Ac.Id/Index.Php/JIWP*, 2020.

Language factor of Al-Qur'an that has communicative characteristic is often used as a political language. According to that argument, the writer is intended to describe comprehensively about Al-Qur'an language in electoral escalation and power struggle in Indonesia. This essay elaborates the discourse of Al-Qur'an language and various perspectives from public in utilizing Al-Qur'an language for the sake of electoral escalation and to seize power in various levels of election event in Indonesia.

### **Politicization of Religion through Al-Qur'an**

Politicization of religion is a condition where political discourse is referenced from religious values such as material value, economy, natural resources, and non-material. This phenomenon must be understood as a part of wide social and religious context about changes in society in the form of globalization, migration, the emergence of religious diversity, and the change of religion and nation <sup>6</sup>. Generally, globalization has a big contribution toward the emergence of politicization of religion. This issue emerges because globalization makes identity negotiation happens and changes religion into political problem. The use of religion in politic can be facilitated by a process exempted by religion and advanced industrial society <sup>7</sup>. The quick shifting of people becomes an influence in politicization of religion. Even the politicization of particular religion can bring up religious privatization as a part of major religion, like what happened in Europe toward Islam as minority religion <sup>8</sup>. Even in many cases of compound society/nation, group orientation on their religion is bigger than the orientation toward national insight, so the process of politicization of religion cannot be separated from the purpose to support their dreams <sup>9</sup>.

Politicization of religion has a deep connection with the use religious symbols in political phenomenon. Religious symbols which are commonly used are Al-Qur'an Interpretations. Al-Qur'an Interpretations that are used for political purposes is a formalization of interpretation. Formalization is something official and appropriate with existing regulations, and most of them are being connected with government structure and politics <sup>10</sup>. Meanwhile, interpretation is defined as a coercion toward

6 Lise Eriksson, "Intersections between Biopolitics and Religion: Cases of Politicisation of Religion in Finland and Norway," *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.18261/issn.1890-7008-2019-01-03>.

7 Jonas Lindberg, "Politicisation of Religion in Scandinavian Parliamentary Debates 1988–2009," *Politics, Religion and Ideology*, 2014, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21567689.2014.965693>.

8 Julia Mourão Permoser, "Austrian MEPs: Between Privatisation and Politicisation of Religion," *Religion, State and Society*, 2014, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09637494.2014.941616>.

9 Masykuri Abdillah, "Hubungan Agama Dan Negara Dalam Konteks Modernisasi Politik Di Era Reformasi," *AHKAM : Jurnal Ilmu Syariah*, 2013, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v13i2.937>.

10 Shova Thapa Karki, Mirela Xheneti, and Adrian Madden, "To Formalize or Not to Formalize: Women

text which is strongly needed to understand a concept and an idea involving process of translating words from the source language into corresponding words in target language <sup>11</sup>. That is why, formalization of interpretation is defined as a process done toward something so it can be based on existing interpretation structure <sup>12</sup>. In Indonesia, interpretation has broad spaces in the development of Islamic thinking, including the field of Qur'an interpretation. Even some Qur'an interpretation then being formalized into the nation's laws and regulations <sup>13</sup> so it can be appropriate with particular political interest.

A of formalization from interpretation products is on verse 30 of Al-Baqarah which emphasized the word *khalifah* as an obligation to delegate a leader based on Islamic regulations and sharia. One of the requirements is the chosen khalifah must be a Muslim. This case is categorized as a narrow interpretation but is strongly believed by many Muslims in Indonesia <sup>14</sup>. This formalization of interpretation then becomes a formalization of Islamic sharia, where it is caused by interpretation of discourse or text and the result of social interaction by particular groups commonly known as Islamic organizations <sup>15</sup>. Interpretation of politic and nation can be done when the nation acts neutral toward sharia inside the interpretation and does not force it to become an official policy or a constitution of the nation. That is why, it is important to remember about the separation of Islam and country, in the same time, we have to emphasize the inevitability to take a good care of the bond between Islam and politic <sup>16</sup>.

## Language Characteristics of Al-Qur'an as a Communication Media

Al-Qur'an language has special characteristics, it is different from other languages. It is because Al-Qur'an characteristics has a function as a communication

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Entrepreneurs' Sensemaking of Business Registration in the Context of Nepal," *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-020-04541-1>.

11 YU Chen-chen and LIANG Jin-zhu, "The Functions of Componential Analysis to the Translation of Cultural Animal Images in The Classic of Mountains and Seas," *Sino-US English Teaching*, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.17265/1539-8072/2016.09.007>.

12 Aziz, 2018

13 Gusmian, 2015

14 Lufaei Lufaei, "Rekonstruksi Jargon Formalisasi Syariat: Upaya Menjaga Persatuan dalam Bingkai Keberagaman," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat*, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajpif.v14i1.805>.

15 Mahmuddin, "Formalisme Agama dalam Perspektif Gerakan Sosial: Prospek Dan Tantangan Di Masa Depan," *Jurnal Diskursus Islam*, 2015.

16 Mahathir Muhammad Iqbal, "Dinamika Wacana Formalisasi Syariat dalam Politik: Ikhtiar Menemukan Relevansi Relasi Agama dan Negara Perspektif Indonesia," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan*, 2014, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ws.2014.22.1.260>.



media between Allah and his creations. AL-Qur'an language does not only refer to physical world, but also across the border of time and space, referring to divinity dimension which is metaphysical.<sup>17</sup> Arabic which is chosen as Al-Qur'an language, has some characteristics that distinguish it from other languages, they are: 1) mental connection of subject-predicator, declarative sentence structure in Arabic without the need of facilitating words to connect subject and predicator; 2) the presence of individuals, all verbs in Arabic cannot be separated from individuals; 3) parallel rhetoric; 4) the superiority of meaning; 5) the presence of I'rab; 6) vocabulary richness; 7) two-word integration; 8) qiyas; 9) dynamism and power.<sup>18</sup>

Al-Qur'an language also has characteristic in certain words that have various meaning. This discussion often comes with *al-wujuh wa al-nazair*. *Al-wujuh* is words with many meaning, meanwhile *al-nazair* are words with similar meaning even if they are used in any place within Al-Qur'an.<sup>19</sup> For example, the word *ummah* is mentioned in Al-Qur'an for 52 times with various meaning being used, it means pilgrims or a group of people, it has religious meaning, a religion believer, time, one group, and many more. Similar to al-Huda in Al-Qur'an which has seventeen meanings,<sup>20</sup> they are: 1) it means firm or still; 2) explanation; 3) religion; 4) faith; 5) to invite or to call out; 6) the Apostles, Holy Books and Knowing; 7) Prophet; 8) Al-Qur'an; 9) al-Taurah; 10) asking for protection; 11) reason or argument, 12) monotheism or the teaching of oneness; 13) behavior guidelines; 14) justification; 15) inspiration; 16) repentance; and 17) guidance.

Al-Qur'an language has the characteristic of metaphoric language and analogy that can be a connector among human ratio with limitation, compared to *Ilahiyah* (divine) dimension and metaphysical dimension which are unlimited. Metaphoric language or symbol language which are more common among literature critics and classic Muslim scholars, are mentioned with terms *majaz*, *tasybib*, or *kinayah*. A language style famous among Arabian litterateurs and often being included in literatures made to relieve anxiety and tiredness of life, to find joy and happiness even if it only happens in imaginary world.<sup>21</sup> The impact of *Ilmu Bayan* existence is the capability of a meaning to be delivered with various language style and different

17 Akhmad Muzakki, "Dialektika Gaya Bahasa Al-Quran Dan Budaya Arab Pra-Islam: Sebuah Kajian Sosiologi Bahasa," *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 2, no. 1 (2007): 55–70.

18 Acep Hermawan, *Metodologi Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* (Remaja Rosdakarya, 2011), 58–71.

19 Wahyudi Wahyudi, "Al-Wujuh Wa Al-Nazhair Dalam Alquran Perspektif Historis," *AL QUUDS: Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Hadis*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.29240/alquuds.v3i1.575>.

20 Jalaluddin As-Suyuthi, *Al Itqan Fi Ulumil Quran* (Beirut: Dar Al Kutub Al Ilmiyah, n.d.), 302.

21 Marzuki Mustamar, "Memahami Karakteristik Bahasa Al-Qur'an Dalam Perspektif Balaghiyah," *LiNGUA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa Dan Sastra* 3, no. 2 (2008).

methods, in beautiful form through *isti'arah*, *majaz*, *tasybih*, atau *kinayah*.<sup>22</sup> Many expressions in Al-Qur'an use those styles to ease the comprehension of a meaning.

Language characteristic of Al-Qur'an is also visible in *al-'am* and *al-khas* study. The interpretation in this study is categorized into three kinds, *nas*, *zahir* and *mu'awwal*, *zahir* interpretation for example, is an interpretation which seems understandable by a person at a glance, but when it is being observed, it can lead to various interpretations, for example *نرہطی* word, which at a glance can have a holy interpretation, but it includes purification by ablution, purification by full ablution bath, the stoppage of menstruation blood.<sup>23</sup> Likewise in the concept of pronouns in Al-Qur'an, there are pronouns that can shorten many words without changing their essential meaning and without repeating those words as well, for example in the following verse of Al-Ahzab: *لہم* word in that verse can replace the previous twenty words without reducing their essential meaning.<sup>24</sup> In *al-'am* and *al-khas* study, there is also uniqueness of words inside Al-Qur'an, there are words in specific form and they can have general meaning.<sup>25</sup> It can be unique because one word can have general and wide scope of meaning.

### Language as a Political Mediator

Language can be used as a tool to obtain power. Language including mechanism to seize and defend power, domination, and hegemony. Language is a material with ideology as its nature. Language is a complex connection of communication; it is consisted of the exchange between linguistic material and relationship of authority from speaker symbol toward interlocutor. Language is never empty of value. Language message recipient will understand the meaning differently. Each language and expression contain antagonist threat which is shown with methods understandable by the sender and the recipient of the message. In each process of conversation, there will be the one who dominate.<sup>26</sup> Fairclough confirmed that language and discourse have roles to create, to maintain, and to change social relation.<sup>27</sup> Language has such a big role, so it is common that a person who wants a power or to maintain a power will use language as an instrument to affect the interlocutor or a particular society.

Power can spread not only from production tools including bureaucracy, but

22 Mustafa al-Jarim, Ali . Amin, *Al-Balaghah Al-Wadibah* (Dar a-Ma'arif, n.d.), 133.

23 Manna` Qattan, *Mababith Fi `ulum Al-Qur'an* (Bayrut: Mu'assasat al-Risalah, 2009), 250-51.

24 Ibid, 197.

25 Ibid, 223.

26 Piere Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 38.

27 Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power* (London-New York: Longman, 1989), 74.

also from language. Language used by politicians most often reflects a structure and a process of dominant power. Adopting Habermas' thinking, as a figure of critical theory and postmodernism, language is an interest. The interest of anyone who uses it. They who have power also master a language, a language that brings their interest of power.<sup>28</sup>

Language can be defined in linguistic way as a sound symbol system with meaning and articulation (produced by steam tools) with arbitrary and conventional in nature, used as communication tools by some groups of people to bring up the feeling and thought.<sup>29</sup> Political symbols, subtly and without any awareness, can be included into language narration. That is why, symbolic manipulation will always be included in every program of power because the authority will not be forever in his position if he loses control of symbol world. Symbols that are not supervised or controlled can threaten the power.<sup>30</sup>

The tremendous power of language is used as a media to obtain political power including executive, legislative, and judicative. A person will play language to affect the society and gain high electability. Those who are blinded with power will use any language for that purpose, including using Al-Qur'an language.

Language in modern society is developing not only to be a control media and social power, but also to explain the domination of other people by other people.<sup>31</sup> It is affected by extralinguistic factor, something that comes from the outside of a language, consisted of the collective strength and power from the speaker.

Power often exists outside language and in various forms, including power which has been established in various social-politic-culture institution of the speaker's community, both modern and traditional. This tremendous power then affect language, so language can have strength to follow the power and capital of the speaker's group.<sup>32</sup>

### **Various Narratives of Al-Qur'an in The Context of Power Struggle in Indonesia**

The use of Al-Qur'an language in political practice can be found in various

28 Mudjia Rahardjo, *Hermeneutika Gadamerian Kuasa Bahasa Dalam Wacana Gus Dur* (Malang: UIN Malang Press, 2007), 48.

29 M Syahrin Effendi, "Linguistik Sebagai Ilmu Bahasa," *Jurnal Perspektif Pendidikan*, 2012.

30 Rahardjo, *Hermeneutika Gadamerian Kuasa Bahasa Dalam Wacana Gus Dur*, 51.

31 Fairclough, *Language and Power*, 3.

32 Ni Wayan Sumitri, "Kekuatan Dan Kekuasaan (Dalam) Bahasa: Potret Tradisi Ritual Etnik Rongga, Di Manggarai Timur," *Mozaic Humaniora* 19, no. 2 (2019): 205–2015.



electoral events and competitions to obtain powers that are available in Indonesia. Religion leaders will be approached more often by politicians and government officials. Their purpose beside their own interest is also to gain support from the influence of religion elites inside the society. From that process, various languages will emerge, in the various form of language both the one that literally uses Al-Qur'an language and the one that implies, closely related and identical with AL-Qur'an language. As stated by Nasaruddin Umar that the closer general election event is, the stronger the upheaval between political language and religious language.<sup>33</sup>

Presidential Election in 2019 could not avoid the language narratives of Al-Qur'an. In one of national media, there is a news titled "Presidential Election Debate is Suggested to Have English Test and Al-Quran Recitation Test".<sup>34</sup> The news comes from suggestion given by each campaign team based on ideas from supporters and netizens in various social media. It is suggested so a candidate can get more support and sympathy from Muslim societies. On the other hand, Al-Qur'an recitation test will be used by political opponent to beat other candidates who are not good enough in Al-Qur'an recitation.

The use of Al-Qur'an recitation test in a sentence, if it is seen from symbolic system theory, is used as an instrument of domination. Functionalism tradition explains the connection of symbols production with the interest of dominant class, an ideology of certain group that is shared to society extensively. Dominant culture not only forms integration among groups or dominant class, but also pseudo-integration of society, fake awareness, and legitimation of rules that have been established. Dominant culture makes hierarchy difference and legitimates this difference. In this kind of pattern, monopoly appears from professional communities who have the competence to be symbolic capitals. Their competence is speech skill, initiation, and mastery of practical things. Production of ideas about social world will lose to the logic of power.<sup>35</sup>

This phenomenon also happened in Presidential Election in 2004. Female candidate for the election got strong attack from various sides because she is a female. A society organization conveyed a statement about prohibition for a female to be a president in a press release. That statement is based on Al-Qur'an and hadith as well as argument from clerics. The press release was conveyed with various theorems and

33 Nasaruddin Umar, "Antara Kekuatan Bahasa Politik dan Bahasa Agama" accessed March 7, 2021, <https://mediaindonesia.com/indonesia-2018/136167/antara-kekuatan-bahasa-politik-dan-bahasa-agama>

34 Jawa Pos "Debat Pilpres Diusulkan Gunakan Bahasa Inggris dan Tes Baca Alquran" Accessed March 7, 2021, <https://www.jawapos.com/nasional/politik/14/09/2018/debat-pilpres-diusulkan-gunakan-bahasa-inggris-dan-tes-baca-alquran/>

35 Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 166.

arguments.<sup>36</sup> Nasaruddin Umar thinks that the blocking of Megawati as a presidential candidate by her political opponent through religious groups to state that a female cannot be a leader, is really effective and troublesome.<sup>37</sup>

This study does not discuss about whether a female president is allowed or not, but to study about using Al-Qur'an language for politics in Indonesia. That the language is used both to obtain power or to block a power. It is in line with what Mudjia Raharjo stated in an essay, that in a political practice, power is spreading not only from production tools including bureaucracy, but also through a language. The language used by politicians more often reflects structure and process of dominant power, adopting Habermas thinking, as a figure of critical theory and post-modernism, that language is an interest. An interest from anyone who uses it. They who have power also master a language, a language that bring an interest of their power.<sup>38</sup>

There was also a similar phenomenon in local leader election, The Governor Election of DKI Jakarta has a phenomenon of politicization of religion using Al-Qur'an. Supporters of a candidate used Al-Qur'an language or Al-Qur'an verse to degrade the other candidates. Because of that, on September 27, 2016, a local leader candidate opposed that campaign in a speech during a visit to Kepulauan Seribu in Jakarta by giving a comment about using verse 51 of Al-Maidah. That event made new polemics with various event of rally.<sup>39</sup>

This phenomenon can be approached with contextual theory. Contextual theory stated that an event can only be understood by knowing the background of user and how the user uses a language. The meaning cannot be comprehended unless it is structured or it is placed on different contexts. The unit of meaning mostly stand side by side one to another, that unit of meaning cannot be understood without paying attention to another unit of meaning that follows.<sup>40</sup> As the word "mother" in mother of the country and mother of the city that have a really different meaning because it is showed by a context where the structure of words being formed. The phenomenon of an expression by a local leader candidate in Jakarta is really affected by a context that the expression is delivered, "do not get fooled by the use of verse 51 of Al-Maidah" expression is delivered before local leader election event, the speaker is

36 Fauzan Al-Anshari, "MMI Keluarkan Fatwa Haram Presiden Wanita" Accessed March 7, 2021 <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/43322/mmi-keluarkan-fatwa-haram-presiden-wanita>

37 Nasaruddin Umar, "Antara Kekuatan Bahasa Politik dan Bahasa Agama" accessed March 7, 2021, <https://mediaindonesia.com/indonesia-2018/136167/antara-kekuatan-bahasa-politik-dan-bahasa-agama>

38 Rahardjo, *Hermeneutika Gadamerian Kuasa Bahasa Dalam Wacana Gus Dur*, 48.

39 Rangkaian peristiwa tersebut dapat dilihat pada berita yang ditulis oleh BBC News Indonesia "Pidato di Kepulauan Seribu dan hari-hari hingga Ahok menjadi tersangka" Accessed March 7, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/indonesia-37996601>

40 Mukhtar Umar, *Ilmu Al- Dilalah* (Cairo: Alam al-Kutub, 1998), 68.

a candidate who also competes in the election and the expression is delivered in his visit to one of his electoral constituent areas. Therefore, the expression has political meaning.

However, if that phenomenon uses Speech Act approach, which is consisted of three categories namely locution act, illocution act, and perlocution act. Locution act is a basic meaning and reference of an act, illocution act means the power caused by the speaker as an order, mockery, complaint, praise, and many more. Meanwhile, perlocution act means impact toward the listener. In other words, locution act is related to speech meaning like what was written in the speech itself, illocution act is related to doing something with certain purposes, for example question, offer, promise, order, request, and so on; perlocution act is related to impact caused by the speech toward interlocutor or even the speaker himself.<sup>41</sup> The expression “do not get fooled by the use of verse 51 of Al-Maidah” by a candidate of Governor of Jakarta in the event, when it is seen from the basic meaning of reference/locution, it shows “prohibition”. And from the illocution act or the purpose of that speech act, it shows “request” which brings impact for that speech to the speaker so he can get chosen in local leader election, however the impact toward interlocutors (not all of them) may show “blasphemy” toward Al-Qur'an, it might be because the speaker is not a Muslim and he has various political variables with him. The impact of that speech event then made various actions, movements, and interpretations.

Illocution speech act based on its criteria can be classified into five: *firstly*, assertive, that is illocution speech act that bind the speaker into the righteousness of proposition being spoken, *secondly*, directive, that is illocution speech act being desired to get an action impact from interlocutor, *thirdly*, commissive, that is illocutive speech act that brings impact of an action toward speaker in the future, *fourthly*, expressive, that is illocution speech act which expresses psychological attitude toward a certain condition, *fifthly*, illocution speech act which performance affects the relationship of proposition content and reality, either it is appropriate or not.<sup>42</sup> If it is watched closely, the expression “do not get fooled by the use of verse 51 of Al-Maidah” is in directive illocution category because it contains suggestion and request, or can also be interpreted as a prohibition, but on different aspect, that expression can also be categorized as expressive illocution, where the speaker express his feeling to “blame” another expression. That is why, that expression got various strong responses and made the speaker reported to authorities and got punished according to the law.

Local leader election in Aceh province brings up a unique tradition. The

41 Imam Ainin, Moh. Asrori, *Semantik Bahasa Arab* (Surabaya: Hilal Pustaka, 2008), 148.

42 Leonie Chaer, Abdul . Agustina, *Sosiolinguistik: Perkenalan Awal* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2004), 53-54.

governor and vice-governor candidate are tested to recite Al-Qur'an in front of the public. Requirement about the ability to recite Al-Qur'an is included in local leader election in Aceh.<sup>43</sup> Not only for local leader candidate, the Independent Commission of Election in Aceh province also apply Al-Quran recitation test for legislative candidates (House of Representatives of Aceh) as what has been regulated by Qanun Aceh number 3, year 2008 about Local Political Parties as Participants in General Election for Members of House of Representatives of Aceh.<sup>44</sup>

That event then brought up various responses, such as from Oky Spinola Idroos, Husni Jalil and Mahdi who wrote in a scientific article titled Al-Qur'an Recitation Test for Candidates of House of Representatives of Aceh and House of Representatives of Regency/City from National Parties, and one of the conclusions is Al-Qur'an recitation test as a requirement for a candidate of House of Representatives in Aceh should be established and included into Fixed Candidate List for House of Representatives. The establishment of Al-Qur'an Recitation Test for candidates from National Parties is not appropriate with legislation.<sup>45</sup>

The phenomenon mentioned previously can be reviewed by using pragmatism prejudice theory, that is early assumption appeared in the mind of communication doers when listening to speech, prejudice is a requirement needed on right or wrong an expression is, whether it can be supported with fact or not.<sup>46</sup> This issue is quite different from *Kalam Khabariy* in *Ilmu Ma'aniy*. *Kalam Khabariy* is an expression which speaker can be considered as being honest or lying, depends on the fact.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, the event about Al-Qur'an recitation test is corresponding with the fact. Implicature of that expression is a must for everyone who wants to be a legislative candidate in Aceh province, those who cannot meet the requirement, cannot be a legislative candidate.

Village head election in a village in Bogor regency also uses Al-Qur'an as a campaign demonstration tool, a village head candidate put a picture of him and his wife on Al-Qur'an covers then distribute them to villagers with hope to get sympathy from villagers.<sup>48</sup> This phenomenon can be analyzed using semiotic theory

43 Komisi Independen Pemilihan Provinsi Aceh "Calon Kepala Daerah Perlihatkan Kemampuan Baca Alquran" Accessed March 7, 2021, <https://kip.acehprov.go.id/calon-kepala-daerah-perlihatkan-kemampuan-baca-alquran/>

44 Qanun Aceh nomor 3 tahun 2008

45 Oky Spinola Idroos, Husni A Jalil, and Mahdi Syahbandir, "Uji Mampu Baca Al-Quran bagi Bakal Calon Anggota Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Aceh dan Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Kabupaten/Kota dari Partai Nasional," *Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 3, no. 3 (2015).

46 Moch. Syarif Hidayatullah, *Cakrawala Linguistik Arab* (Tangerang Selatan: Alkitabiah, 2012), Hlm.133

47 al-Jarim, Ali . Amin, *Al-Balaghah Al-Wadibah*, 139.

48 Berita ini terdapat dalam media IDN Times dengan judul "Calon Kades di Bogor Jadikan Al-Qur'an Alat

by identifying sign, signal, and symbol.<sup>49</sup> A *Sign* is a substitution for other things. That is why, sign needs interpretation. A picture of village head candidate is a *sign* that needs interpretation, because there is a replacement stimulus or it can be named as *signal*. A replacement stimulus in that phenomenon is someone who wants to join an event of village head election. Therefore, there comes a *symbol*, symbol is a *sign* made by an interpreter about a signal and act as a replacement for that signal. That action is synonymous with *signal* being interpreted.<sup>50</sup> *Symbol* obtained from that phenomenon is by putting a picture of a village head candidate and it is done when village head election is approaching, is a symbol to invite all Muslims in his area to choose him in the village head election. *Symbol* of Al-Qur'an recitation test in the regulation gives an interpretation of compulsion and it can make someone who does not have that requirement is not be able to continue the process to be a candidate in general election.

## Conclusion

Language has a function as a communication tool among society both written and spoken, but language also has a role to create, maintain, and change social relation. Language is a complex communication, which can exchange linguistic material with relationship of symbolic power so it can be used to seize and maintain power, it is used for domination and hegemony, because power is not only produced through political instrument only, but also through a language with strength. In this case, the use of Al-Qur'an language for politic in Indonesia still happens frequently, either by quoting Al-Qur'an verse or absorption of Al-Qur'an language. That use of Al-Qur'an language has complex interpretation for the interlocutor, because to understand the text, it can be done by using various linguistic approaches with extralinguistic factors on them, so reaction can appear both from attitude and action in many ways.

Even so, this study only makes Al-Qur'an language as a material object by emphasizing on its use in power struggle narratives. The variety of elements inside Al-Qur'an that make it able to interact with society's condition are not being researched in this essay. The function of other elements in Al-Qur'an significantly creates comparison with the result of this study. That is why, a further study is needed to find the role of other element in Al-Qur'an as an effort to spread narratives of power.

## Supplementary Materials

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Peraga Kampanye" Accessed March 7, 2021, <https://www.idntimes.com/news/indonesia/rubiakto/calon-kades-di-bogor-jadikan-al-quran-alat-peraga-kampanye/2>

49 J.D. Parera, *Teori Semantik Edisi Kedua* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2004), 9.

50 Ibid, 10.



The data presented in this study are available in [insert article or supplementary material here] (Usually the datasets were analyzed from library research can be found in the whole data references ).

### **Acknowledgements**

The authors thankfully acknowledge the informants Maya, Nilzam, Khoniq,

### **Authors' contributions**

Mohammad Makinuddin is the sole author of this research article

### **Data availability statement**

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

### **Conflict of interests**

None of the authors of this study has a financial or personal relationship with other people that could inappropriately influence or bias the content of the study.

### **Funding**

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

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