

## **The Legitimation Construction in Regent of Garut's Statements on His Unregistered Marriage: A Critical Discourse Analysis**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Legitimation is one form of the social actions which is often done even though it is probably less recognized. The present study examines the legitimation construction by the Regent of Garut and also the ideologies underlying the legitimation. It uses van Leeuwen's (2008) framework regarding discursive construction of legitimation under the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis. This study is largely qualitative, but some quantification is employed to support the description. The collected data are in the form of statements delivered by Regent of Garut related to his unregistered marriage to a young girl. The data are analyzed in the unit of clause to reveal the legitimation construction in the texts. This study finds that from four major types of legitimation asserted by van Leeuwen (2008), only three types of legitimation are evidenced in the texts, i.e. rationalization (44.44%), authorization (44.44%), and moral evaluation (11.11%). Hence, the Regent of Garut's actions in the texts are strongly legitimized through the logical explanation to support the unregistered marriage, supported by referring to high status as the basis of the actions, and the reference to moral value of humanity to avoid adultery. The ideologies underlying the legitimation are feudalism and masculinism.

**Keywords:** Critical Discourse Analysis, Legitimation, Regent Of Garut, Unregistered Marriage, Ideology.

## INTRODUCTION

Unregistered marriage raises issues that are often discussed in Indonesia. In terms of religion, unregistered marriage is considered legal to perform as it is recorded in Islamic religious law. From a legal standpoint, unregistered marriage is deemed invalid or illegal, because it is not recorded by the state law. Today, unregistered marriage abuse is often committed by certain people, which had been occurred in the case of unregistered marriage of Regent of Garut, Aceng Fikri (AF); he conducted unregistered marriage in the late 2012. AF's scandal is an instance that reflects social action described by a discourse. As what van Leeuwen (2008) stated that a discourse is a way to describe social practice and it can also legitimize or delegitimize certain action of actors in the social practice and in certain context. The study attempts to investigate the legitimation construction by Regent of Garut in his statements in media related to his unregistered marriage, which employs framework of

discursive construction proposed by van Leeuwen (2008). The legitimation is identified based on four categories of legitimation by Leeuwen (2008), which are authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, and mythopoesis. Besides legitimation, ideologies of the social actor is also identified through the language use.

This study is conducted to reveal the types of legitimation used in Regent of Garut's statement in an interview related to his short and unregistered marriage, and the ideologies underlying the legitimation through an interview taken by one of TV programs. This study is expected to analyze how an important person, in this case Regent of Garut, legitimizes his action through an interview taken by one of TV program. This study will employ a CDA framework by Theo van Leeuwen about legitimation construction. It will analyse the types of legitimation which appear in the interview, then it will find out the

ideology of Regent of Garut through the types of legitimation appeared.

### **Media Discourse**

Media discourse refers to interactions that take place through a broadcast programme, whether spoken or written, in which the discourse is oriented to a non-present reader, listener or viewer (O’Keeffe, 2011). Media discourse is also often considered as a modification of reality. In other words, media discourse often conveys different information to hide certain reality. In other words, media discourse has undergone some dramatic transformations of reality (van Dijk; see also Collins 1993; Hollander 1992; Minogue 1993). In the transformation of media discourse, media may use certain power to influence people, in this case, audience. Wodak and Bursch (2004) state that in our more globalizing world, media have gained more power.

### **Legitimation and Ideology**

Legitimation is usually related to the acts of defending. There will be

some reasons provided by certain people who do not like to be criticized by others. Legitimation is also often related to an authority, as what Van Dijk (1998) states that legitimation is often associated with power; it is related to justification caused by social power which could be defined by law, regulations, rights or duties. Van Dijk also adds that legitimation discourse may be expected in politics affairs when officials are accused of breaking law, policies, or political action.

When an issue of legitimation is raised, ideologies are often related to it. There are some ideas related to ideology; Fairclough (2003) states that ideologies are hidden and latent type of everyday beliefs which often appear disguised as conceptual metaphors and analogies. Fairclough (2003, as cited in Wodak & Meyer, 2009) also has other perspectives of ideology: “Ideologies are representations of aspects of the world which contribute to establishing and maintaining relations of power, domination and exploitation. They may be enacted in

ways of interaction and inculcated in ways of being identities.” Ideologies are also the basis of social representations which presuppose norms and values (van Dijk, 2008). There are two ideologies found in the study. First, feudalism, which comes from word “feudal”. It is understood as "aristocratic" as opposed to "democratic" and "hierarchy" as opposed to "egalitarian", which is usually associated with political or social regime. Brown (1974) states that since the middle of the nineteenth century, the concepts of feudalism and the feudal system have dominated the study of the medieval past. The great authority of these terms has radically influenced the way in which the history of the Middle Ages has been conceptualized and investigated, encouraging concentration on oversimplified models that are applied as standards and stimulating investigation of similarities and differences, norms and deviations. While the second is masculinism, which often links to an attitude of men which dominates women interests. Bunnin and Yu (2004)

states that masculinism is an attitude of men ignoring the existence of women and is concerned exclusively with male opinions and interests. It tries to justify the claim that only male views have value; in another sense, masculinism advocates the elimination of all discrimination against men because they are male.

### **Van Leeuwen's Framework on Discursive Construction of Legitimation**

In identifying the construction of legitimation in discourse, van Leeuwen (2008) proposed four categories of legitimation, namely authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, and mythopoesis. Authorization refers to legitimation which is vested by authority. The authority can be tradition, custom, law and person which are usually included to institutional authority. Authorization refers to legitimation which is vested by authority. The authority can be tradition, custom, law and person which are usually included to

institutional authority. This legitimation makes certain people with power play important roles to make the discourse acceptable. In moral evaluation, the legitimation lies on the values that are commonly realized in society. Basically, moral evaluation deals with the good or bad; but there are different ways to identify that particular thing is good or bad. Rationalization provides logical reasons to make acceptance of moral activity easier to the people. Rationalization deals with the purpose of particular action that contains moralization so that the activity can be accepted by the audience of discourse.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research will use a qualitative approach to achieve the aims of the study. It is because the study involves an empirical data material, in this case is an interview (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994 in Klenke, 2008), then the study approaches to a research with analyzing data (Prasad and Prasad, 2002 in Klenke, 2008).

The quantitative data will also be used in the study, because there will be some statistical mode to know the trends of legitimation construction used in the text. The data collected are statements from Regent of Garut in an interview in one of TV news program. All the statements in the interview are related to his short and unregistered marriage with a girl which has spread in many mass media. This study employs the CDA framework to analyse the statements from Regent of Garut. The analysis will begin with the identification of the statements regarding his legitimation in his short and unregistered marriage (action). It will be followed by the classification of legitimation construction; then, the classification will be measured to identify trends in the use of legitimation construction. Then, the ideologies are obtained by inferring the legitimation.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This study finds that from the four major types of legitimation, there are

only three types that are evidenced in the texts, i.e. rationalization, authorization, and moral evaluation. Legitimation constructions that are mostly used in the text are rationalization and authorization with eight occurrences (44.44%) each from the total 18 occurrences, followed by moral evaluation with two occurrences (11.11%). This study finds that from four major types of legitimation, only three types are evidenced in the texts. i.e. rationalization (44.44%), authorization (44.44%), and moral evaluation (11.11%) (see Table 4.1).

| N o.  | Types of Legitimation | Number of Occurrences | Percent age (%) |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1.    | Rationalization       | 8                     | 44.44           |
| 2.    | Authorization         | 8                     | 44.44           |
| 3.    | Moral Evaluation      | 2                     | 11.11           |
| Total |                       | 18                    | 100             |

By the occurrences of rationalization and authorization legitimation, they show that those types are dominant compared to another type, which is

moral evaluation. The result shows that Regent of Garut has rational reasons to perform unregistered marriage; and his decision to perform the marriage is based on others who are more experienced than himself, hence he is more convinced to decide it. Meanwhile, the moral evaluation legitimation which appears less in this study shows that Regent of Garut tends to have feeble moral. Rationalization legitimation which is classified into goal orientation found in this study, shows that Regent of Garut, in his statements, wants to avoid people's assumption that he performs unregistered marriage because he wants to humiliate women. In other words, Regent of Garut tries to show his positive aims in performing unregistered marriage, and to make it acceptable for people, but he tends to hide certain purposes of marrying the girl. He states that he performed unregistered marriage not solely to humiliate women; it may indicate that Regent of Garut has other purposes to marry the girl, and "humiliating women" may be one of his actual purposes. Meanwhile, the

fewer occurrences of theoretical rationalization show that Regent of Garut tries to legitimize his action by giving theoretical reason. As in legitimizing his unregistered marriage, Regent of Garut uses the explanation that his unregistered marriage only lasts for four days because there is a problem in his family. Authorization is the second type in the trends of legitimation categories identified in the texts. In authorization, particular action is legitimized by particular people, institution, or even regulation (see van Leeuwen, 2008). This study finds personal authority as the only form of legitimation used in the texts. In this study, personal authority is mostly performed by certain people with authority, which are the colleagues of the Regent of Garut, in this case they are masters in Islam. It indicates that in legitimizing unregistered marriage; he takes less risk by referring to other person's status as the basis of his actions since "judgments are a function of the status of the member" (see Bernstein, 1971 in van Leeuwen, 2008). As it is commonly known, that people with

highly regarded status can often persuade others with their statement. The way Regent of Garut refers his action to the masters indicates unregistered marriage as his action is the best solution in his religion. Moral evaluation is the type of legitimation that occurs least in this study. It is used in legitimizing unregistered marriage to avoid immoral act, such as adultery. Regent of Garut claims that he obeys his religion rules, which are avoiding adultery by performing unregistered marriage. In other words, he uses moral value as a reason of performing the unregistered marriage. Rationalization is mostly identified from goal orientation of the actor, while authorization is mostly identified from the verbal process of a person with authority. Moral evaluation is identified from the reference of the value system to make the action acceptable for people. This study also finds that the statements which have been conveyed by Regent of Garut are strongly legitimized.

By the dominance of rationalization and authorization legitimation, it can further be said that those legitimations can link to the ideology of the Regent of Garut. His rational reason of marrying his unregistered wife and the authority of himself describe feudalism and masculinism as the ideologies of the Regent of Garut. The first ideology that can be inferred from the text is feudalism, which is defined as a "situation" in which the minorities pander to the great authority (Brown, 1974). The values of feudalism lead to the action of dominating a minority or inferior. The Regent of Garut tries to dominate his unregistered wife by marrying her under unregistered marriage, and then divorcing her after four days marriage. In this case, the Regent of Garut who has a great authority as a Regent tries to show his authority over his unregistered wife and the woman can only accept what has been decided by her husband. Besides, Regent of Garut keeps disclaiming his action as a wrong decision while lifting up his position as Regent of Garut who certainly

knows all rules and regulations. While the second ideology is masculinism. The values of masculinism show the action of dominating; different from feudalism, masculinism is defined specifically as men's attitude of dominating women (Bunnin and Yu, 2004). Similar to what have been mentioned above that Regent of Garut tries to dominate his unregistered wife; but the difference is that it only relates to the gender of Regent of Garut as a man.

## CONCLUSION

Legitimation has become an element of political practice that can be used to strengthen the actions and the ideology of particular people. Legitimation is potentially analysed through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) because CDA concerns power relation and ideology; and legitimation is an attempt to negotiate power and reveal ideologies. Legitimation constructions as part of CDA are used to legitimize particular actions



in discourse. The legitimation construction used in different discourses might vary, depending on the issues in the discourses and the actions which are legitimized in the discourses. This study uses political discourse which is in the form of interview as the data to be analyzed. For future studies, the analysis might use other types of texts such as multimodal texts. The investigation of legitimation in multimodal texts can result a deeper analysis by viewing not only the use of words in the texts but also by viewing the pictures or symbols presented in the texts to support the justification. It can enrich the analysis of representation in CDA where the analysis is not only relying on words usage, but also supported by the analysis of pictures or symbols presented in the texts.

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