

Islam and Terorism in the Discourse Analysis of Riau Mass Media

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Abstract— This study aims to analyze the attitudes and media discourse towards labeling of terrorists against Islam. Data was collected using interview and a review of news about terrorists in Pekanbaru. Informants included are those who were in charge of reporting to each newspaper. This study deploys Fairclough CDA model of critical discourse analysis procedure consisting of three stages, description, interpretation and explanation. The results showed that the attitudes and discourse shown by two media essentially put forward the true values of journalism, such fair, independent, objective and factual. However, the attitude was precisely trapped in Western discourse such an effort to fight Islam as a terrorist religion. This research contributes to media efforts to gatekeeping news about terrorists, so that they are not trapped into Islamophobia by the western perspectives.

Keywords—Islam, Terrorists, Discourse, Media

I. INTRODUCTION

As a predominantly Muslim country, Indonesia is apparently absorbed by the western campaign against terrorists. The enormity of the attack on the herd of terrorists was perceived to be extraordinary food for the mass media worldwide, including Indonesia.

In Indonesia, cases of attacks carried out by a group of 'Hardline Islam' also occurred. For example, the Bali bombing case involved Amrozi and Imam Samudra as intellectual actors and executors. Such was the case with the bombing of several churches in Indonesia in 2004 during Christmas celebrations. In the case of the Bali bombing, many people were the victims of the suicide bombing. This was the case with the church tragedy in several regions in Indonesia which were carried out simultaneously.

Now these cases have become historical records that will never be forgotten. Even so, many are left and scattered from cases of terror committed by a group of understandings of 'Hardline Islam'. One thing left and scattered is the western phobia of Islam and the terrorist seal of Islam by the mass media. In the Qur'an Surah As-Shaf verses 7, 8 and 9, Allah SWT says:

يَهْدِي لَا وَاللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامَ إِلَى يُدْعَى وَهُوَ الْكَذِبُ اللَّهُ عَلَى أَقْصَى مِمَّنْ أَظْلَمَ مَنْ
وَلَوْ نُورُهُ مِثْمُ وَاللَّهُ بِأَفْوَهِهِمْ اللَّهُ نُورٌ يُطْفِئُونَ يُرِيدُونَ (٧) الظَّالِمِينَ الْقَوْمَ

لِيُظْهِرَهُ الْحَقَّ وَدِينَ بِالْهَدَى رَسُولُهُ أَرْسَلَ ذِي الْهُوَ (٨) الْكَافِرُونَ كَرِهَ
(٩) الْمُشْرِكُونَ كَرِهَ وَلَوْ كُلِّهِ الدِّينَ عَلَى

Translation of Surah As-Shaf, verses 7,8 and 9:

And who is more unjust than one who invents about Allah untruth while he is being invited to Islam. And Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people (7)

They want to extinguish the light of Allah with their mouths, but Allah will perfect His light, although the disbelievers dislike it. (8)

It is He who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to manifest it over all religion, although those who associate others with Allah dislike it. (9)

Islam is a *rahmatan lil alamin* religion. This belief gave birth within many prominent figures mastered all sectors and aspects of the world. Unfortunately, Islam is tarnished by individual actions of for which it is considered as a religion teaching violence and will never create peace on earth. 9th September 2001 terrorist activities in the United States, the Bali bombings, the Intifada suicide bombings, the violence in its Clarify and several other bombings in Indonesia basically complemented the controversy about who or which party was more suitable to be called a terrorist [1]. Western society began to worry and fear of the existence of Islam, they view as a terrorist religion teaching the believers to behave anarchist [2].

The outmost current issue is that the freedom of press turns out to be a big question for public. Some people accuse the press as a propaganda medium for a number of interest and motives [3]. It seems as if the mass media are unable to play an important role as social control, trusted source of information, and enlightenment for many people. Allegations of the mass media considered only as a tool of interest to reach power and to seize projects in government agencies and various other interests triggered the attitude of public apathy towards the shows of mass

media news. Whereas the government has regulated the existence of the press through Law Number 40 of 1999 concerning the Press stating that freedom of the press is a right granted by the constitutional or legal protection relating to the media and published materials such as disseminating, printing and published newspapers, magazines, books or other materials without government interference or censorship [4].

Related to the news about terrorist cases, many opinions stress out that Islam is not a terrorism belief, yet it never teaches violent behavior in the state of life [5]. Islam is still Islam and terrorists must be burned down. The problem that occurs, the mass media coverage always tends to link Islam and terrorists which leads to the labeling of terrorists against Islam [6].

Admittedly, the mushrooming of the media industry is inseparable from market principles. Free competition seems to force the mass media to bring up their creativity to attract and gain interest from the public. As a result, mass media are bound by massive commercialization flows so that everything is done to get profit. Furthermore, the mass media is also trying to put a network of production and distribution of cultural products such as news, advertisements, soap operas, films, quizzes, and so on to be integrated directly in market principles. Therefore it is easy to guess, as a "cultural industry", whatever is done is always at the point of hope of creating an increase in circulation, hits and ratings [7].

Therefore, based on this reality, the researcher wants to find out more deeply about the attitudes and discourses of the media that are rolled out related to the labeling of terrorists against Islam in the mass media. Thus the researcher specifies the research through the title: Islam and Terrorism in the Discourse Analysis of Riau Mass Media.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several articles examining media, terrorists and Islam, including *Is it Terrorism: Public Perception, Media and Labeling The Las Vegas Shooting* by M.J. Dolliver and friends using mass media content analysis to see the perspective of the media in reporting terrorist acts [8]. Then, Khatarina Niemeyer's research entitled *from live-tweets to the archives of the future: Mixed media temporalities and the recent French Terrorist Attacks* adopting phenomenological approach in his research to examine the use of the terrorism term in mass media content [9]. Recent research entitled *We are at war Continuity and rupture*

in French anti-terrorist discourse by Julien Fragnon using the method of critical discourse analysis. [10].

In the study of *Why to Choose the Path of Terror*, the meaning of terrorism is understood as a method of violence, carried out by certain individuals, groups or countries for specific political objectives in a planned, systematic and organized manner by causing fear and threat on the enemy where the chosen target is not a direct target the intended but symbolic target. Social science researchers define the terrorist axis as follows:

"... violence calculated, shocking and directed against civil society, including security personnel and military who are not on duty, occurs in peaceful conditions and other symbolic targets carried out by secret agents for psychological purposes, namely publicizing political problems, religion and/or intimidation or coercion of governments or civil society to approve their demands. "[11]

Despite the never-ending controversy over mutual accusations, contemporary terrorism is more easily understood as the action of a group by using violence to create fear to support the group's goals. One of the controversies over media coverage is rooted in the question of the mass media as part of or even one of the groups [12]. Impressed, the media seemed ignorant of the various faces of terrorism. For the media, terrorism is terrorism and terrorists are terrorists. Preaching that results in the emergence of psychological fear of criminal crime is paralleled by reporting that results in a sense of terror in the community by blasting and threat of bombing. In addition, the mass media tends to show their coverage of a series of terrorist acts and their consequences compared to coverage of the motives behind the terrorist group's own attacks and efforts to crush terrorist acts.

In Indonesia, the labeling process has been going on for a long time. In fact, it has often happened that the label has been internalized in everyday life as if it were an ordinary thing, not a stigma anymore [13]. Herbert Strentz in the News Reporters and News Sources stated "terrorism is not a phenomenon that colors the 20th century, but this action is increasingly prominent because of news media coverage" [14]. No doubt, almost most of the issues of terrorism were obtained from the media. The media unceasingly uncover stories whose purpose is nothing but to satisfy readers who are curious for more information about terrorist activities and networks. It is no doubt that the temptation of news sensation to attract audiences often colors the news about terrorism. It is not even impossible for reporters

to be able to speculate on the suspect in the process of finding the news so as to lead readers to make a relationship between one event and another.

In historical records, the political conflict between the West and the Islamic world or more precisely the destruction of the Islamic world reached its peak when the Ottoman Caliphate collapsed on May 23, 1924. Along with the destruction of the last bastion of the Islamic Caliphate in Turkey, Muslims were scattered and divided into States nationally inspired revival of European nationalism. As a result there were disputes and even wars between 191 Islamic Radicalism countries [15]

In the discourse of Islam, many people associate the ideology of terrorism with the doctrine of jihad, which in Christianity is equated with the crusade. There are 35 times the words of jihad found in the Qur'an. In the Islamic tradition, jihad has a variety of meanings. However, the jihad is generally divided into two concepts: First, the moral concept, which is defined as the struggle of Muslims against the passions or the struggle against oneself (jihad al-nafs), which is called jihad al-akbar. Second, the political concept is defined as the concept of "just war," jihād al-asghar [16]. These two concepts, side by side, are always changing and developing all the time. First, at the beginning of Islam when the borders of the Islamic territory did not yet exist, jihad was interpreted as a concept of war. But the meaning of this jihad changed when the Islamic government was established and had set the limits of its territorial authority. The next process, the Islamic world is recognized and in fact, living in harmony with neighboring countries that are not Muslim. Bonney asserted that the use of the concept of early jihad in Islam to define the meaning of "war" in the modern era of Islam was an anachronistic, while damaging the reputation of Islam [17].

David Rapoport in *The Four Wave Terrorism* said that the current period is perceived to be a religious terrorism. However, entering the year 2010, terrorism that occurred showed differences from previous years with a religious orientation. From these oddities then the question arises whether there has been a change in orientation in the terrorism movement in Indonesia from a religious orientation to another orientation? [18].

Preaching about terrorism is also an inseparable part of the construction process. Mubarak's research results, 2012 showed that the terminology of terrorism in the

mass media coverage in Indonesia has always been associated with bombing actions occurred. Terrorism diction is chosen more than other terms such as anarchist acts, acts against the law [19].

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This study deploys Fairclough CDA model of the critical discourse analysis procedure which consists of three stages; description, interpretation and explanation [20]. The research methodology in this research uses a qualitative research methodology. Qualitative methodology is intended to present a picture of how and why a phenomenon or reality occurs [21]. In qualitative research, researchers go directly to the location [22]. Data collection techniques were carried out through a process of documentation and interviews with key informants.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

More specifically, the concepts and theories used as a reference in analyzing data using Norman Fairclough Discourse Analysis can be described as follows: First is the description, the researcher outlines the discourse strategy used by newspapers positioning terrorist labeling of Islam in the news discourse. Second is interpretation, namely interpreting the results of data analysis in the first stage by linking it to the process of producing text. Lastly, the explanation, at this stage the analysis is intended to seek an explanation of the results of the interpretation in the first and second stages, so that finally the positioning, motives and labeling of terrorists against Islam are revealed in the newspaper news discourse.

From the results of data analysis conducted, the editorial attitude towards each report is based on the philosophy that was built at the beginning of the establishment of the press company. It was revealed to be a vision and mission with the goals and objectives to be achieved by the mass media. On the basis of that vision and mission the media construct every reality into news that is accompanied by official regulations by the government in Press Law No. 40 of 1999.

The ruler of the media industry in Indonesia today is in the invisible hand, the market power. The mass media can also be cruel and heartless. At the end, the market also applies a very straightforward and simple rule of the game: survival of the fittest. There came a media irony related to media survival. The media to be independent of course must be able to support themselves. The media clearly cannot accept public funding if you want to be truly independent.

Therefore, a common thread can be drawn that the attitudes of Pekanbaru and Riau Pos Tribun Daily Newspapers towards the reporting of terrorist cases remain basically based on the principles of journalism. The editor of Pekanbaru Tribune Newspaper seeks to see events around terrorists as a real and objective reality without being based on subjective prejudice. While editorial attitude of Riau Pos daily newspaper

towards the news about terrorists is emphasized on the principle of accommodative journalism which eventually becomes their philosophical values. The principle of accommodative journalism boils down to peaceful journalism. Editors see reality in true objectivity. The editorial staff tries to photograph events based on the ideology of the press as the initial and main foundation of the media in carrying out its functions. The ideology of the media carried is accompanied by aqidah values as a belief in the existence of God.

The news about terrorists has succeeded in rolling the discourse about the figure of the perpetrators of the 'jihad' identified with Islam. This portrait finally gave rise to the discourse that Islam as a radical religion eventually gave birth to a phobia of Islam among non-Muslim laypeople. Fear of being part of the world community towards Islam has not only become a western trap, but this condition has led to misunderstandings of people in the concepts and values of the Islamic Shari'ah that is kaffah.

For example, meaning of jihad is sometimes partially understood while the concept of jihad in Islam according to Alquran is that

((أَخْبَارَكُمْ وَنَبَلُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ مِنْكُمُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ نَعْلَمُ ۖ وَيُؤْتَى وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ))

And We will surely test you until We make evident those who strive among you [for the cause of Allah] and the patient, and We will test your affairs. (Muhammad, Verses 31)

((جَهَنَّمَ وَمَلَأُوهُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَاغْلُظْ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ الْكُفَّارَ جَاهِدِ النَّبِيُّ أَيُّهَا يَا))
((الْمَصِيرُ وَيُسْ))

O Prophet, fight against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be harsh upon them. And their refuge is Hell, and wretched is the destination. (At-taubah, Verses 73)

Jihad against the munafiq here is to convey blasphemy to them and not with the sword as illustrated by the Apostle when the munafiqs appeared, including Abdullah bin Ubay bin Salul as based on the hadith of the Prophet:

اللَّهُ نَهَى مَا هَجَرَ مَنْ وَالْمُهَاجِرُ اللَّهُ طَاعَةَ فِي نَفْسِهِ جَاهِدَ مَنْ الْمُجَاهِدُ (عَنْهُ)

"Mujahid is a person who strives / sincerely performs obedience to Allah and the person who does hijrah is a person who hijrohs from anything that is prohibited by Allah" (HR Ahmad 6/21, Mrs. Hibban: 25 and Alhakim and agreed by Imam Ad-dzahabi)

From the description of jihad above, it is very clear that jihad does not only have the meaning of war. It is additionally to seeking knowledge, to practice it, preach, fight the lust and worship to God can also be called jihad, if the words of jihad are coupled with the pious deeds.

From the news presented by Riau Pos and Tirbun Pekanbaru newspapers, the discourse developed by the two media is more directed at acts of terror committed by radical groups without labeling the aqeedah believed.

Even so, the news that had been rolled out turned out to have made the image of the teachings of Islam and Muslims as a whole cornered. Intentionally or unintentionally, Islam in the West's perspective is perceived as a religious teaching that justifies and spreads terrorism on earth. Whereas Islam as a religion that is rahmatan lil alamin (a blessing for the universe) actually forbids the occurrence of such terrorism whatever its pretext. It is precisely terrorism in the name of Islam and its people in totality. Not only piracy of the teachings of Islam itself in accordance with the interpretation of the passions, but also destroy Islam and its values from within.

Although the discourse rolled out by the two media does not label aqeedah, the symbols of Islam remain soluble in the news. This is due to the unprofessional redaction of the packets covering the both sides. So skewed propaganda related to global terrorism in the Islamic world is caused by wrong views of Islamic teachings, hatred towards Islam and its people, as well as inter-media competition and internal unprofessional work of the media.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The attitude and discourse shown by the two media are essentially promoting the true values of journalism, such as fair, independent, objective and factual. However, the attitude they have actually contradicts the discourse that was rolled out, where the news discourse about terrorists being rolled out is trapped in Western discourse in an effort to fight Islam as a terrorist religion. The news that had been rolled out turned out to have made the image of Islam and the Muslim community as a whole cornered. Intentionally or unintentionally, Islam in the West's perspective is perceived as a religious teaching that justifies and spreads terrorism on earth.

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