THE VOICES OF MALCOLM X AS AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM IN *THE BLACK REVOLUTION* SPEECH: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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THE VOICES OF MALCOLM X AS AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM IN *THE BLACK REVOLUTION* SPEECH: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

ABSTRACT

This research aims to reveal how Islam presence plays a role to solve racial issues existed between blacks and whites as portrayed in Malcolm X's speech in the 1960s, when African-Americans were still involved in chaos and conflict with whites. This research attempts to figure out how and why The Black Revolution movement is constructed by Malcolm X in that way. The situation depicted at that time shows inequality that causes racial discrimination seen in social gap, minority, and poverty that afflict African-Americans. As one of well-known black figures, Malcolm X turned up with his ideas to solve the problems faced by blacks in America, and The Black Revolution became one of the influential speeches in response to what actually occurred with African-Americans. He also strived for freedom and equality to blacks, and it led Malcolm X to propose a new movement delivered through his speech as part of the civil rights movement. This attracts the researcher to choose that speech as the object of study. As a library research, it applies note-taking technique to collect the data that then are analyzed using Michael Foucault's discursive approach. From the speech, it also can be concluded that Malcolm X proposed a peaceful revolution that is in line with Islamic teachings. Other meanings implied from his words in voicing the ideas through his speech are also explained in this research.

Keywords: Speech, African-American Muslim, Revolution, Discourse

ASPIRASI MALCOLM X SEBAGAI MUSLIM AFRIKA-AMERIKA DALAM PIDATO REVOLUSI HITAM: ANALISIS WACANA

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap bagaimana kehadiran Islam berperan untuk mengatasi masalah rasisme antara kulit hitam dan kulit putih seperti yang disampaikan melalui pidato Malcolm X di tahun 1960-an, tahun ketika orang Afrika-Amerika terlibat dalam kekacauan dan konflik dengan orang kulit putih. Penelitian ini juga berusaha untuk menjawab bagaimana dan mengapa gerakan Revolusi Hitam dikonstruksi oleh Malcolm X. Situasi yang digambarkan pada saat itu menunjukkan ketidaksetaraan yang kemudian memunculkan deskriminasi ras yang tampak jelas pada kesenjangan sosial, minoritas, dan kemiskinan yang menyerang orang-orang Afrika-Amerika. Sebagai salah satu tokoh orang kulit hitam yang ternama, Malcolm X hadir dengan ide-idenya untuk memecahkan permasalahan yang dihadapi oleh orang kulit hitam di Amerika, dan Revolusi Hitam menjadi salah satu pidato yang berpengaruh dalam menanggapi apa yang sebenarnya terjadi pada orang Afrika-Amerika. Malcom X juga berusaha keras untuk memperjuangkan kebebasan dan kesetaraan orang kulit hitam. Hal inilah yang membuatnya mengusung gerakan baru yang disampaikan dalam pidatonya sebagai bagian dari tindakan gerakan hak-hak sipil. Karena alasan inilah, peneliti tertarik untuk memilih pidato ini sebagai objek penelitian. Penelitian ini merupakan studi kepustakaan dengan teknik mencatat untuk mengumpulkan data yang dianalisis dengan pendekatan diskursif yang diusung oleh Michael Foucault. Dari pidato tersebut, dapat diambil simpulan bahwa revolusi damai yang diusulkan oleh Malcolm X sejalan dengan ajaran-ajaran Islam. Makna lain di balik kata-katanya dalam menyuarakan ide-ide untuk orang kulit hitam melalui pidato tersebut juga dipaparkan dalam penelitian ini.

Kata kunci: Pidato, Muslim Afrika-Amerika, Revolusi, Wacana

MOTTO

Get yourself beyond the level anyone else could be.

DEDICATION

Again

The one and only

Just Me My Self and I

Thank you for being

Glorious and Warrior

Brave, Bruised, Unbreakable

Bursting through the barricades

There is nothing I am not worthy of

Then I deserve your love

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Yogyakarta, 14 April 2019

The Writer

Sekar Tanjung Nawang Kesturi

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Literature can be represented as a reflection of reality in social life. Abrams in his book said "in expanded use, literature designates also any other writing including philosophy, history and even scientific works addressed to a general audience that is especially distinguished in form, expression and emotional power" (2005:178). In short, literature is human speech which contains values, the nobility of purposes, amount of ideas, and beauty of forms. These purposes can change ideology, mind, and act for those who hear, read, and watch it.

In the scope of literature, there is one of the types called non-fiction. It is an informational script which deals with an authentic, actual-life subject, and usually it gives a point of view or assumption, and judgment on truth or reality. The researcher attempts to enlighten the details about prose as one of the sub-genres in non-fiction literature. The prose could be further categorized into essays, speeches, sermons, short stories, poems, and interpretations. The researcher emphasizes that literary works can be defined as the expression of human experience in the form of expressive language which is delivered in an interesting and impressive way.

The researcher points out that speech deserves to be analyzed as the object of this research because speech is categorized into the non-fiction genre in literature. The researcher describes that speech is the linguistic form of writing that consists of ideological, emotional, and aesthetic content of literary works. The word 'speech' is defined as "a formal talk given usually to many of people on a special occasion and broadly delivered in the kind of purpose or discourse" (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, third edition).

As stated by Richard Murphy in The Quarterly Journal of Speech, for centuries, speech is justified as a literary form, received less and less attention, and seem on its way of extinction. Moreover, the speech as a literary form is redefined, some difficulties which prevent appreciation of the form are discussed and a mild plea is made for a return to the appreciation of speech as a literary genre (1958: 117). As a result, speech is categorized as non-fiction in the literary genre, and it is deserved to be analyzed within the literature scope.

Some writings could influence other people in a particular way, and it is the goal of a literary work. That is why the researcher chooses speech by Malcolm X entitled *The Black Revolution* as the object of this research, and it is also because this research is important as proof that speech is categorized as literary works. Therefore, the researcher is interested to analyze the ideas of Malcolm X's voices through his words

regarding the African-American issues throughout *The Black Revolution* speech. This research is also focal for giving a clear analysis concerning solving the African-American's problems in America.

The main concern of *The Black Revolution* speech that is interesting to analyze is Malcolm X was bounded with both identities as a Muslim and an African-American. In America, being black is already a problem. Here, Malcolm also appeared with his identity as a Muslim. He was a great person who came up with double identities, and it was declared in the first section of his speech. The way he delivered the speech by bringing his double identities were categorized as a brave and unusual action. That is why the researcher needs to take a deep analysis focusing on how Malcolm's two identities influence his voice on proposing the solution for black people in America. These are explained thoroughly by the researcher in the next chapter.

The researcher also has some reasons for choosing Malcolm X's speech as the object of this research. This research needs to explore the social context that appears behind the phenomena through the speech by using discourse analysis. Malcolm X is a figure of black activist and famous leader of the civil rights movement. Here, the researcher intends to show how power was constructed in the Black Revolution Speech and how the power could encourage people with his words, his mind, and his

Muslim perception towards the discrimination of African-American under the racial probles in America.

The researcher chooses *The Black Revolution* speech from Malcolm X because this speech could assure people that through the Islamic way people could discover a better way to live a life. The worth reason why the researcher chooses *The Black Revolution* speech from Malcolm X is that there is something unusual for particular things. Those are the way of the speaker sees and thinks about how to solve the problem of African-American towards whites as African-American Muslims. The revolution that Malcolm proposed is the movement to change the position of African-American towards whites in America. It is about how Malcolm stands for African-Americans in the middle of multicultural people while he was a Muslim and African-American declaring that his faith is the only way to have a wave of peace in life. The way of Malcolm X thought and acted as an African-American Muslim is powerful towards America so that it could make some movements in the terms of human right. In short, his identity was published in front of African-American at the Church is a brilliant way to push their pattern of mind and emotion (Malcolm X, 1965:59).

Malcolm X had many speeches during his life. There are several reasons why *The Black Revolution* is deserved to analyze in this research. Within this speech, he fought and stood for African-Americans in America

in a different way. As a Muslim, he suggested the solution for African-Americans' problem. The voice gave the solution for racial issues with the new movement for gaining freedom and equivalence. Those were the reasons why Malcolm X proposes a different revolution. The speech has a different point of view and different way of thinking after Malcolm was converted into the "real" Islam as an African-American Muslim civil right leader for the black movement. Previously, he still believed that Elijah Muhammad was the Prophet of Allah, but it was wrong. Then, Malcolm knew about the truth, that the real Islam as his religion shows that Muhammad PBUH's as the last Prophet of Allah according to the Quran.

The reasons why the researcher is interested in choosing this speech as the object of study is because *The Black Revolution* speech from Malcolm X is the impact happened months after he delivered it. As a result, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Civil Rights Bill on July 2nd. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the most crucial civil rights law in the United States. It is officially prohibited racial discrimination on color, religion, sex and national origin. The next was a ban on the practice of unequal application of voter registration laws. The last was a ban on racial segregation on school, workplace, and places of public accommodation https://www.lbjlibrary.org/assets/uploads/general/Destiny OfDemocracy_ 1964CivilRightsAct.pdf). It is proven that what Malcolm intended for the peaceful movement was already achieved months after the speech. The

speech from Malcolm X influenced the realization of civil rights acted in the 1964th regarding freedom and equality.

Another interesting fact about this speech is the way how he delivered this speech. He used a unique way because he spoke out in front people attending the Abyssinian Baptist Church (Malcolm X, 1963: 66). This is also supported by Pinkey, the point that makes the researcher excited with *The Black Revolution* speech is the way how Malcolm X delivered his words. He spoke out in front of society that is not Muslim and most of them are Christian. (1969: 122)

The researcher applies discourse analysis by Michel Foucault as the theory and Stuart Hall's ideas to obtain better explanation and understanding toward the research problems on this research. Discourse analysis examines the ways how the power relationship is produced, managed through text, and practiced in which it can affect the meaning that wants implied. In discourse, ideologies are also involved when the speakers of that language construct the meaning as an interpretation of the social situation. Ideologies also can impact social attitudes shown in the discourse structures. The representation of such relations in context models controls almost all levels of discourse, and it is not only as the typical properties of formal or informal speech or politeness forms (A.Van Dijk, Teun: 11).

The important message behind the phenomena of African-American is portrayed in Malcolm X's speech. This research focuses more on how African-American Muslims are voiced through the speech and the reflection in the social context in the real culture of *The Black Revolution* from Malcolm X. The researcher is interested in discovering the power constructed behind the voices of a Muslim and an African-American as Malcolm X's identities represented in the speech. Moreover, this research concerns the issues of human rights and minority seen from a religious perspective especially as an African-American Muslim. By the circumstance explained above, the researcher applies the discursive approach and the theory of discourse analysis to figure out and answer the problem statements of this research.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the explanation in the background of study above, the research questions that are designed from the problems found in this research are:

1. How are the voices of African-American Muslims constructed in *The Black Revolution* speech by Malcolm X?
2. Why is it constructed in that way?

1.3 Objectives of Study

From the research questions above, the objectives of the research are not only to discuss how the voices of African-American Muslims are

constructed in *The Black Revolution* speech using discourse analysis but also to describe a new movement proposed by Malcolm X.

1.4 Significance of Study

The researcher hopes this research can conceptualize and actuate a critical perspective that shows the readers how African-Americans strive for their lives. Moreover, this research is expected to inform the readers about tough lives experienced by African-Americans in America at that time. This research also provides thoughtful and fair analysis that might be useful for academic communities, especially the researches that focus on human rights. This research hopefully can contribute not only to American studies but also to all the nations which live in multicultural society. In depth, this research is dedicated to all people in order to always share kindness, respect one another, and treat others equally.

1.5 Literature Review

The researcher finds out about some prior researches related to the topic and the theory that this research also focus on. The first study entitled *The Black Muslims in America* was written by C. Eric Lincoln and published by Beacon Press in 1961. This study examines the classic treatment of the Nation of Islam during the leadership of Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X; unsurpassed as a sociological study of the sources of black Muslims' belief and practice. The author attempts to

extend the relationship between Elijah and Malcolm towards the Nation of Islam.

The second study entitled *Black Nationalism: A Search For An Identity In America* was written by E. U. Essien-Udom and published by the University of Chicago in 1962. This study explained an excellent standard treatment of black nationalist' belief and practice in the 1950s, including an analysis of the black Muslims. The writer intended to give detailed information about being a nationalist as a black in Muslim's point of view.

Another study that the researcher found is entitled *When The Word Is Given: A Report On Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X, And The Black Muslim Movement* written by Louis E. Lomax (Greenwood Press, 1963). The study focused on the informal and perceptive attempt by a journalist to unveil the mysterious shroud of religious rituals, puritanical behavior, and unorthodox beliefs that are intimidated and intrigued outsiders this day.

The fourth study found is the book entitled *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*. It was written by Peter Louis Goldman and published in 1973. He captured the eloquence and imagination of the forces of white racial oppression that made Northen blacks feel difficult to deal with the poverty and the minimal resources at their clear-out before Malcolm's breaking rhetoric rallied black bitterness and anger to their backing. In Goldman's

study, he presents an clear analysis of the great political restrictions that placed on the black militant people of either religious or secular awareness.

Another study related to this research is *The Victims of Democracy: Malcolm X and the Black Revolution* written by Eugene Victor Wolfenstein (1981). This critical essay attempts to mix some levels of analysis to find the connection between Malcolm X with the African-American experience in the 1960s. Eugene uses Marxist theory to analyze and give understanding of race connection in America. The other theory used is a psychoanalytical point of view for the idea of racism correlation that was explained through political perspective by using the autobiography of Malcolm X.

From the prior researches described above, it can be drawn that the research entitled *"The Voices of Malcom X as an African-American Muslim in the Black Revolution Speech: A Discourse Analysis"* has never been conducted. The researcher proposes *The Black Revolution* speech by Malcolm X as the object of study. This speech was influential because it created a new revolution for black people in America at that time. This peaceful revolution was in line with Islamic teachings, and it was because Malcolm stands as an African-American Muslim. The role of Islam to give positive effect to Black people in America becomes the main concern of this research paper. It shows that this research is different from the prior researches that have been found and explained in the previous paragraphs.

1.6 Theoretical Approach

Based on the phenomena existed in the speech, the researcher decides to choose the appropriate theory that can be used to examine and figure out the problem found in it. The theory proposed by Michel Foucault is called discourse analysis, this is suitable to answer the problems in this research. Michel Foucault prefers to classify his thought as a critical history of modernity. His perspective is beyond the critical theory that attempts to explore the relation between power and knowledge. However, proposing the introductory explanation of a discourse as a form of social action plays a role in part of creating the social world, including knowledge, identities and socal relations with the specific social patterns (Jorgensen and Philips, 2002: 5). It concerns how knowledge with certain discourse is related to power and defines the way of particular things that are represented, thought about, practiced and studied (Hall, 1992; 6). This research aims to work with case by discovering patterns in and across the statement and identifying the social consequences of various discursive representations of reality. His works were much more historically grounded and more attentive to the historical specifics.

Theoretically, discourse is constructed culturally based on the representation of reality as the truth. Foucault concerned how the production of knowledge more than just meaning through what he called discourse. The various disciplines of knowledge are found in the human and social sciences. It explains how human understands something in our

culture and how our knowledge about the society is produced in different periods of time. The relation of power was his main goals (Hall, 1992; 43). When discourse is about the production of knowledge through the language, it is about language and practice. Meaning and meaningful practice are constructed in depth in the discourse (Hall, 1992; 44).

Foucault stated that knowledge is not always the form of power, but power will be involved in any circumstance where the knowledge should be used or not. The relation between knowledge and power is not only linked to the assumption of truth, but it has power to make it happen. Power relation should be correlative with the constitution of knowledge (Foucault, 1977; 27). Power and knowledge define the subject position or subject framing that it is possible to be and to do.

In this research, the discourse analysis by Michael Foucault is used to analyze what is behind the phenomena that happened in the speech, especially to take a look at the shift of switch attention in Foucault from language to discourse. Foucault focuses on power. Here, power is defined as productive; power considered as part of discourse, knowledge, bodies and subjectivities. Power spreading across various social practices and provides the situation of possibility for the social also objects that are divided to achieve their individual characteristics and connections to others (Jorgensen and Philips, 2002: 5).

Foucault proposed discursive approach to give some representation by drawing shape of his major concepts; the ideas of discourse, the issue of power and knowledge; and the question of the subject (Stuart Hall, 1997: 47). Discursive practice refers to a historically and culturally specific set of instructions for arranging and creating various forms of knowledge. In Foucault's term, it is called as the episteme. This is the creation of scientific knowledge that refers to the orderly 'unconscious' structures and relates to the period of time and place. It is a form of possibility for knowledge in a particular period of time and place (https://michel-foucault.com/key-concepts/).

According to Foucault, the mind is controlled by power. Here, the position of power does not belong to the individual, state, or groups, but power is spread across different social practices. Power is understood as a tool that is functioned for controlling and monitoring something. Power is responsible for both creating the structure of the social environment and the particular ways of the word formation. Within discourse, the writings could find out how the words are formed and appeared in the social context that the text intends to (Hall. 1992; 302).

Knowledge about and practices toward all the subject, he stated that it is historically and culturally specific. They cannot meaningfully exist outside the discourses. It means that they are represented in the discourse, produced in knowledge, and assumed by the discursive practice

and disciplinary techniques of a certain society and time by the outside ways. This approach is the key subjects for evaluating the correlation between knowledge, power and the body in modern society. Moreover, it is always being used to the rule that organizes in social practice (Stuart Hall, 1997: 47).

According to Foucault, truth is defined as a system of way to do for the creating, regulating, and spreading statements. It focuses on how effects of truth are produced in the discourse. The analysis should talks about how discourses are constructed in that way and how the impression are represented in either true or false pictures of reality. The researcher examines the idea of power or the idea of meaning constructed within the discourse (Jorgensen and Philips, 2002: 14).

In Malcolm's speech, there are a lot of social cases that appear and interesting to be discussed within the discourse. Text and language in discourse analysis are related to social spaces in which two fundamental social processes simultaneously are existed and represented in the real world and social interaction. The way someone speaks and writes is shaped by the structure of power in the society because it is defined by the struggle and conflict as the discourses reflection and the possibility to create some conflicts.

1.7. Method of Research

The important part of a research is methodology. To examine this research, discourse analysis is chosen as the method. The methodological aspect shows how discourses are represented, either as the truth or as norms. This also takes how knowledge and power is constructed and what evidences are used to prove them. The researcher needs to find out where they belong to*, keep apart* or *joined together*. The importance is represented in the discourse, and what does not belong to them needs to be also answered. How they are explained in the analysis should be as clear as the steps set. Moreover, identities, actions, and practice that belong to the discourse as norms are also mentioned later.

1.7.1 Type of Research

This is a qualitative research that aims to explore the social context that may appear behind the phenomena through Malcolm X's speech by using discourse analysis. The researcher discusses how to manage several variables of the theory clearly using the qualitative method in order to increase understanding of human experience. This qualitative analysis is also to give the final meaning that rises through the voice of an African-American Muslim. This research applies the descriptive qualitative method to examine and to identify what is emphasized in social issues existed in society at that time through the speech.

1.7.2 Data Sources

The source chosen for the data of this research is the text of the speech entitled *The Black Revolution* delivered by Malcolm X. The primary data are the script and the audio of his speech. The supporting data are the biography movie of Malcolm X about African-American. Moreover, the theory of discourse analysis is selected from compatible books, scientific writings, and papers from the cyberspace.

1.7.3 Data Collection Technique

To collect the data, this library research applies the note-taking technique that is used to point out the information found in the data source. After doing preliminary reading and listening to the audio of the speech, the researcher finds the data in form of phrases, words, sentences, and paragraphs. Furthermore, to answer the research questions, those data are explained descriptively since it also applies qualitative method.

1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique

To analyze the data, the researcher employs textual analysis by applying close reading technique that focuses on significant details to develop deep understanding of the script in Malcolm X's speech. Moreover, this research also uses the discourse analysis as the methodology. Firstly, the researcher looks into the suitable representation that belongs to the truth or norms. Next, the researcher finds the evidence to prove and categorize them into two groups, the first is *keep apart* and

the second is *joined together*. Furthermore, the researcher finds the suitable subject that represents not only what the importance is but also how the power works in the characters that might affect something they do and will be. Then, the researcher examines the regime of power by categorizing it into identity, practice, and action that next are constructed as a discourse. Lastly, the researcher answers the questions consistently and concludes the final statements from the result of the analysis.

1.8 Paper Organization

This research is made up of four chapters, and each chapter is divided into some divisions. Chapter one is the introduction. It contains background of study, research questions, objectives of the study, significances of study, literature review, method of study, theoretical approach, and paper organization. The next chapter is chapter two. It comes up with the explanation of the intrinsic elements and the analysis to answer the research questions with the theory of discourse analysis. The final chapter consists of the conclusion and the suggestion from the analysis that also contains the constructive criticism for future researches.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

3.1 Conclusion

After analyzing the data in the previous chapter, the researcher draws some conclusion from the results. The result of the analysis is framed with the discourse theory and discourse analysis as the method applied to analyze the voices of an African-American Muslim constructed in *The Black Revolution* speech. From that speech, Malcolm X proposed a new kind of revolution for civil rights movement. Moreover, in his perspective, Islam plays an important role to solve the racial issues faced by blacks in America. Additionally, it also can be concluded that the voice of African-American Muslims represented in *The Black Revolution* speech are constructed with a wider point of view for proposing a new revolution for African-Americans.

For answering the first research question in this research, the researcher finds out that blacks play an important role as the truths and norms in discourse. Islam constructs knowledge and makes Malcolm's perspective different. Islam is Malcolm's identity, and this help him to solve blacks' racial issues. Whites keep apart from others, and blacks and Islam joined together. In his speech, African-Americans are portrayed with racial discrimination and social gaps occurred in America. The minority of African-Americans and Muslims also becomes the factor how African-

American Muslims are voiced. It is also influential in calling for a new revolution which the black nationalism as the basis for the philosophy of Malcolm X in its action for civil rights.

Shortly, the representation of the African-Americans' voices in the speech can be framed into two points. Malcolm, a Muslim and African-American leader of black movement, proposes the new perspective that whites could live together with African-Americans equally. America is still possible to have a bloodless revolution which is harmless and safe to the new movement to fight for the African-Americans' freedom based on Islamic teachings. The second point, what he proposes in the new revolution is systematically and politically strives for blacks to gain over their rights to vote that might be able to change all the structures of America, so blacks can truly achieve their freedom.

As a Muslim, the researcher strongly agrees with what Malcolm proposed in *The Black Revolution* speech that is in line with Islamic teaching and decided a new revolution as the solution for the African-Americans' problems. Hopefully, by reading this research, the readers can obtain the moral value to be a good leader and to solve the problems by applying the Islamic teachings that always provide kindness in every aspect.

3.2 Suggestion

The researcher understands that this research still needs many improvements to do. It is why the feedbacks and comments are warmly accepted to make it more proper. For the readers or the researchers that are interested to study in depth about the speech, there are many other issues and aspects that can be analyzed, such as the alienation of black using African-American studies or Black Studies, black consciousness, or the representation of whites and others.

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