

Conceptual Metaphors for ‘Kafir’, also known as non-Muslim, in Contemporary Jakartan Political Discourse

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Metaphor is both conceptual and linguistic expressions we talk and think about something in terms of something else. It is very pervasive and powerful than previously thought. According to an experimental study done by Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2011), metaphor can give a profound impact on people’s mind, i.e. different metaphorical frames could create differences in opinion. This is why metaphor is widely used in politics. According to Brownowski (2011), to make metaphor is also to make a political claim.

Ever since Jakarta’s Chinese descendant governor was accused of committing a blasphemy towards Indonesian Muslims in 2016, there have been metaphorical expressions emerging in Jakartan political discourse voiced out by Indonesian Muslims to label non-Muslim people. The racial and religious issues have been constant reasons for violence towards the minority in Indonesia in general. Following are the metaphorical expressions that have been emerging due to the blasphemy case: *Haram pemimpin kafir* ‘it’s forbidden to have a kafir leader’, whereas *haram* is also used to define morality in Islam. This metaphorical expression signals that those Muslim people who do not mind being led by a kafir are classified as immoral people. Another expression example found is *orang Indonesia ga takut sama zombie, takutnya zombie PKI sama zombie kafir* ‘Indonesian people are not afraid of zombies, but of Communist zombies and kafir zombies’; which intends to picture that non-Muslims are zombie-like which a Muslim should be afraid of. This paper investigates the conceptual metaphors used by Muslim Indonesians towards their non-Muslim fellows in the political aiming to understand how non-Muslims are perceived by Indonesian Muslims recently setting with qualitative methodology (Stefanowitsch, 2006) as its approach.

References

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