

## Representation of 'Muslim' in Jakarta Governor Election 2017 in *The Washington Post*: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

This research explores how *The Washington Post* online newspaper represents Muslims and non-Muslims in the Jakarta governor election in 2017. The researcher obtained the data from the article in *The Washington Post* on May 5, 2017. This qualitative research used Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis Theory (2003) approaches in the textual and social practice analysis dimensions. The textual analysis dimension is analyzed using Halliday's transitivity theory (2014), focusing on process type at representational meanings. The researcher collects, classifies, and explores the data. The findings show that the most apparent in the sentences of articles are mental and verbal processes, and there is no behavioral process. The result shows that the *Washington Post* represents Muslims primarily negatively. Muslims is represented as conflict maker and a winner in the event because of the non-Muslim candidate's offense. The Muslim society is represented as having conflict, and hard-line Muslim communities want to apply Islamic law to the Indonesian government.

**Keywords:** critical discourse analysis, muslim, representation, transitivity

### INTRODUCTION

The representation of Muslims in the US became an interesting issue, especially after the WTC building attacks in 2001. Trevino, et al. (2010) claimed that there are still many misconceptions about this religion and its adherents in the United States due to media portrayals, language barriers and

cultural differences, and a lack of understanding about true Islam. Despite not being considerably different in their portrayals of Islam, all three elite newspapers—The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, and The Washington Post—portrayed Muslims more negatively after September 11. Before and after the attack, each newspaper had given more negative terms than positive and neutral terms combined. Muslims were described in the majority of negative terms as terrorists, extremists, fundamentalists, radicals, and fanatics (Trevino et al., 2010). In addition, using corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis, Mahmoud Samaie and Bahareh Malmir (2017) found that, in general, Islam and Muslims are associated with violence, religious radicalism, and Islamic extremist militants.

Islam is mostly portrayed as violent, with Muslims often negatively framed (Ahmed & Matthes, 2017). The research on how the media shapes Muslim and Islamic identity focused on Western nations, Muslim nations, and Muslim media was largely ignored (Ahmed & Matthes, 2017). Shahram Akbarzadeh and Bianca Smith examined the representation of Islam and Muslims in Australian media (Akbarzadeh & Smith, 2005). Onaiza Drabu examined the representation of Muslim and Islam Indian Prime-Time News (Drabu, 2018). In line with research in the US media, both studies in Australia and India show that Islam and Muslims are portrayed with negative impressions. However, to positively portray Islam and Australian Muslims, Australian media is deliberately constructed with familiar and positive imagery.

Over time, much research has focused on Muslim countries in various issues such as religious practice, political issues, and the welfare of Muslim countries. As the world's largest majority Muslim nation, Indonesia has many compelling issues for either local or overseas media. One of the biggest issues attracting the world's interest is the Jakarta election, colored by many conflicts and demonstrations in blasphemy cases accused by hard-line Islamist groups toward the non-Muslim Governor candidate.

Numerous scholars have examined this issue using diverse focus points and methodologies. Rai and Mahadian (2017) analyzed the representation of Ahok in the case of blasphemy in *Suara Merdeka* and *Rakyat Merdeka* semiotically. They discovered that Ahok represents minorities who lack influence and power among the majority of the political class, particularly in Indonesia. Ahok feels intimidated by the accusations of blasphemy charged against him, and some politicians who disagree with him have politicized the accusation. Sukma Alam (2019) used critical discourse analysis to evaluate how the *Republika* Ideology was represented in the news coverage of the second round of the Jakarta Election. He discovered that Anies Baswedan is portrayed as the incumbent's opponent, which results in an image of a courteous leader who refrains from cursing in public and has ties to Muslims.

In comparison, Islam's blasphemy movement stands in for Ahok as the incumbent. Syafruddin Ritonga's analysis of the anti-Ahok rally's news

reality construction in 2020 examined the clash of civilizations. They discovered that conflict polarization in media had been influenced by the mediated symbolic conflict upheaval practiced by both Kompas and Republika (Ritonga et al., 2020). The third study examined the problem using communication research.

Linguistically, Hakim et al. (2019) examined the representation of both candidates (Ahok-Djarot and Anies-Sandi) in the Jakarta Election in online media. Using critical discourse analysis, they found that the Tirta.id represented Anies-Sandi negatively while Ahok-Djarot positively. In contrast, Republika.co.id represented Anies-Sandi positively and Ahok-Djarot negatively.

Based on the previous studies, the focus of the studies is the representation of Ahok (Rai & Mahadian, 2017), both Anies-Sandi and Ahok-Djarot (Hakim et al., 2019), media news ideology (Alam, 2019) and the civilization clash constructed by the newspaper (Ritonga et al., 2020). There is no study focusing on Muslim representation in that case. The data of all the studies are from newspapers in Indonesia.

Meanwhile, this study aims to analyze the Indonesian Muslim representation in US Media related to the Jakarta Governor election in 2017. Thus, the novelty of this study is focusing on Muslim representation in US newspapers. Using critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013), the authors tried to analyze the view of The Washington Post online newspaper as the American post media about 'Muslim' in the Jakarta Governor election 2017 concerning representation analysis. At the textual level, this study aims to analyze processes type at representational meanings using the transitivity theory of Halliday (2014a). It is expected that Indonesian aware of the effect of Muslim activities in Indonesia on the world. Therefore, this study shows a representation of Muslims in Indonesia based on a US newspaper view. Therefore, future research is expected to find a solution to construct a positive representation of Indonesian Muslims in the worldview through linguistics.

## METHOD

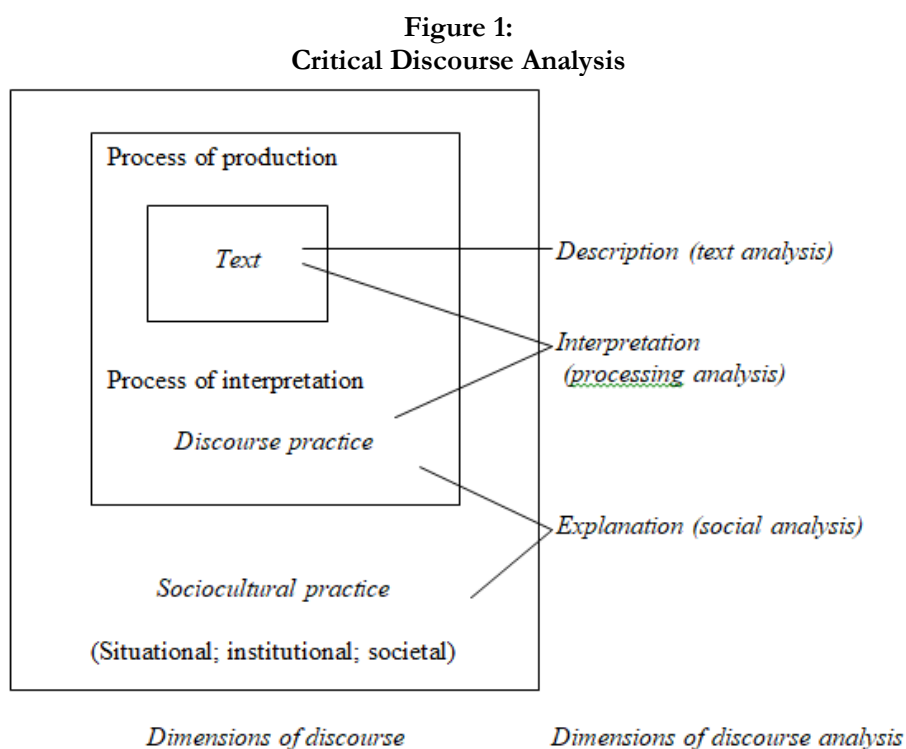
The methodology of this study is qualitative research because this research is concerned with qualitative phenomena or phenomena relating to or involving quality or kind (Creswell, 2014). It uses critical discourse analysis by Norman Fairclough (2003) and grammatical analysis by M.A.K. Halliday (2014a) in analyzing the data. This study is concerned with the Jakarta Governor election 2017, which is very interesting to investigate because of the blasphemy case accused by hard-line Islamist groups toward non-Muslim Governor candidates. The data source is the Washington Post online newspaper article titled "Rise of hard-line Islamist groups alarms moderate Indonesian Muslims," May 7, 2017 (Emont, 2017).

The researchers become a crucial instrument for collecting, classifying, and analyzing the data to analyze the representation of 'Muslim'

in the Jakarta Governor election 2017 from The Washington Post online newspaper article. In analyzing the data, the researchers do many steps:

1. Selecting the clause about Muslim
2. Classifying the process
3. Describing the representation in textual analysis
4. Describing the representation in the social analysis.

The analysis steps are described in the following Figure 1 based on Fairclough's approach:



Based on Figure 1 above, after data reduction, the collected data have then been analyzed in three levels. The first is text analysis using Halliday's theory about processes in the clause. The second is how the data are interpreted due to their context and the broadest scope, discourse practice. The last is social analysis due to situational, institutional, and societal practice.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Jorgensen & Phillips (2002) analyze that the norms and values that underlie texts are often hidden rather than overtly stated. They argued that Norman Fairclough and others suggested that a critical approach to discourse analysis might help reveal these often 'out of sight' values. It is an approach

that examines the use of language and asks why it has been used that way and its implications.

Jorgensen & Phillips (2002) state that critical discourse analysis (often abbreviated to CDA) provides theories and methods for the empirical study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains. Fairclough (2010) argues that critical discourse analysis is not just an analysis of a discourse (or, more concretely, texts). Still, it is also part of the systematic transdisciplinary analysis of relations between discourse and other elements of the social process. It is a general commentary on discourse and includes a systematic analysis of texts. It is not just descriptive, but it is also normative. It addresses social wrongs in their discursive aspects and possible ways of righting or mitigating them. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) draws from work carried out by a critical theory that considers people's social, cultural, economic, and political ways and how relations of power ideologically shape the production and reception of texts. Critical literacy draws on this critical view of discourse and originates in Paolo Freire's work. He proposed an approach to education that aimed to empower and give a voice to marginalized groups of learners.

A critical perspective on discourse analysis explores the connections between language use and the social and political contexts in which it occurs. It deals critically with discourse communities' norms and expectations and raises social, economic, and political issues. The cases are gender, ethnicity, cultural difference, ideology, and identity, and how these are reflected in texts.

Based on the three dimensions of Fairclough's approach to critical discourse analysis in the previous discussion, Fairclough (2006:4) states that the 'text' dimension attends to the language analysis of texts. Social and cultural analyses can only be enriched by this textual evidence, which is partly linguistic and partly intertextual - partly a matter of how links between one text and other texts and text types are inscribed on the surface of the text. Texts are viewed as multi-functional in this sort of sense, though in a somewhat different way, under the distinction between genres, discourses, and styles as the three main ways in which discourse figures as a part of social practice – ways of acting, ways of representing, ways of being. Alternatively, to put it differently: the relationship of the text to the event, the wider physical and social world, and the persons involved in the event.

Three Major types of text meaning are:

1. Action
2. Representation
3. Identification.

Fairclough (2003) analyzes that all three main types of meaning (Action, Representation, and Identification) are simultaneously at issue in clauses. Each gives a particular perspective on the clause and specific analytical categories. An essential element in group formation is representation, meaning one can be represented by proxy when physically absent. There are no objective groups since groups are always created through

the contingent construction of equivalence among different elements. It is not the case that the group is formed first and later represented; the group and representative are constituted in one movement. Van Leeuwen (2008) argues that anthropologists and sociologists have always realized that representation is ultimately based on practice, on "what people do."

#### **a. Textual Analysis: Representation in Clause**

Fairclough (2003) states that representational meanings in the clause can be represented in clauses including aspects of the physical world (its processes, objects, relations, spatial and temporal parameters), parts of the 'mental world' of thoughts, feelings, sensations and so forth, and aspects of the social world.

Representational meanings, from this perspective, clauses can be seen as having three main types of elements: Processes, Participants, and Circumstances. Processes are generally realized as verbs, Participants as Subjects, Objects, or Indirect Objects of verbs. Furthermore, Sujatna (2013) argued that there are six different processes: material, mental, relational, verbal, existential, and behavioral process. Halliday (2014b) explores the different types of processes that are built into the grammar of English as follows:

- i. Material clauses: processes of doing-&-Happening
- ii. Mental clauses: processes of sensing
- iii. Relational clauses: processes of being and having
- iv. Behavioral clauses: processes of physiological and psychological behavior
- v. Verbal clauses
- vi. Existential clauses

After collecting the data, the clauses about Muslims. The researchers analyze those clauses based on their processes. The total data found in the article "Rise of hard-line Islamist groups alarms moderate Indonesian Muslims" is 46. Those are material, mental, relational, and verbal processes. There are no behavioral and existential processes found. The dominant process is verbal (15 data). Then, it is followed by the material process (5 data) and the relational process (3 data). The minor appearance is a mental process.



i. Material processes

Based on Halliday's theory of clause as representation (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014b), the data analysis is described in the following.

**Data 1:** *In mid-February, Muhammad al-Khathbath, leader of the hard-line Muslim Community Forum, held a court on the top floor of a Jakarta fast-food joint.*

<i>In mid-February</i>	<i>Mubammad al-Khathbath, leader of the hard-line Muslim Community Forum</i>	<i>held</i>	<i>court</i>	<i>on the top floor of a Jakarta fast-food joint</i>
Circumstance	Participant	Process	Participant	Circumstance
Time	Actor	Material	Goal	Place

The type of process is a process of doing; therefore, the process type is material. Then, *In mid-February* is time, *Mubammad al-Khathbath, leader of the hard-line Muslim Community Forum*, is an actor, *held* is the material, *court* is the goal or affected, *on the top floor of a Jakarta fast-food joint* is place. From the analysis above, the kind of process is a material process. The process extends to another participant; that is goal. The material clause construes a quantum of change in the flow of the event, that is Jakarta Governor election 2017. The actor, Muhammad al-Khathbath, leader of the hard-line Muslim Community Forum, does the process that is held, affecting the goal of court. The editor of The Washington Post represents Muhammad al-Khathbath, leader of the hard-line Muslim Community Forum, as the actor affects court in mid-February on the top floor of a Jakarta fast-food joint.

ii. Mental processes

**Data 25:** *Nuruz Aman of Ansor compared such organizations to the Indonesian Communist Party, a boogeyman from Indonesia's past.*

<i>Nuruz Aman, of Ansor</i>	<i>compared</i>	<i>such organizations to the Indonesian Communist Party, a boogeyman from Indonesia's past</i>
Participant	Process	Participant
Senser	Mental	Phenomenon

From the analysis above, the type of process is a mental process. Mental clauses are concerned with the experience of the world of a person's consciousness. The mental clause construes a quantum of change in the flow of the Jakarta Governor election 2017 event in a person's consciousness. The phenomenon, which is *Nuruz Aman of Ansor*, is senser. Furthermore, referring to the previous clause, such organizations are Muslim organizations pushing to create a caliphate. The phenomenon, *such organizations to the Indonesian Communist Party, a boogeyman from Indonesia's past*, is a thing. The editor of The Washington Post represents *Nuruz Aman, of Ansor* as a senser construed by a change in the Jakarta Governor election 2017 event.

iii. Relational processes

**Data 45:** *For Nuruzzaman, the moderate Muslim leader, it is crucial to oppose the hard-liners, whatever the difficulties.* ("Rise of hard-line Islamist groups alarms moderate Indonesian Muslims")

<i>For Nuruzzaman, the moderate Muslim leader</i>	<i>It</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>crucial to oppose the hard-liners, whatever the difficulties</i>
Circumstance	Participant	Process	Participant
Purpose	Carrier	Attributive	Attribute

The process is a process of being. Therefore, the process type is relational. Then the process is the attributive mode of the relational clause. Furthermore, *For Nuruzzaman, the moderate Muslim leader* is the purpose. *It* is the carrier. *Crucial to oppose the hard-liners, whatever the difficulties* is attribute. Since it is the relational clause, the clause characterizes the carrier, which is it. The editor of The Washington Post attributes it, which is to oppose the hard-liners, as crucial.

iv. Verbal process

**Data 3:** *Sharia would become the law of the land, non-Muslims would lose their leadership posts, and thieves, in accordance with Islamic law, would have their hands lopped off, he said.* ("Rise of hard-line Islamist groups alarms moderate Indonesian Muslims")

<i>Sharia would become the law of the land, non-Muslims would lose their leadership posts, and thieves, in accordance with Islamic law, would have their hands lopped off</i>	<i>he</i>	<i>said</i>
Participant	Participant	Process
Reported	Sayer	Verbal

The type of process is a process of saying; therefore, the process type is verbal. Then, *Sharia would become the law of the land, non-Muslims would lose their leadership posts, and thieves, in accordance with Islamic law, would have their hands lopped off* is reported, *he* is the sayer, and *said* is verbal. Based on the analysis above, the type of process is verbal. Verbal clauses are an essential resource in various kinds of discourse in this article. They contribute to creating a narrative by making it possible to set up dialogic passages. 'Saying' must be interpreted in a rather broad sense. It covers any symbolic exchange of meaning. The sayer, he, puts out a signal. Verbal processes might more appropriately be called 'symbolic' processes, which in this clause is said. The reported *Sharia would become the law of the land, non-Muslims would lose their leadership posts, and thieves, in accordance with Islamic law, would have their hands lopped off*, is the reporting service of what is said. The editor of The Washington Post represents *Sharia would become the law of the land, non-Muslims would lose their leadership posts, and thieves, in accordance with Islamic law, would have their hands lopped off* as the topic of what he says.



## **b. Social Analysis: Sociocultural Practice**

The discourse production process's nature can be referred to as the more comprehensive sociocultural practice within which it occurs. Fairclough (2006:6) states that the 'social practice' dimension attends to issues of concern in social analysis, such as the institutional and organizational circumstances of the discursive event and how that shapes the nature of the discursive practice and the constitutive/constructive effects of discourse referred to above. Based on Fairclough's theory, Wodak & Meyer (2016) argue that the social process can be seen as the interplay between three levels of social reality: social structure, practices, and events. Social practices 'mediate' the relationship between general and abstract social structures and particular and concrete social events; social fields, institutions, and organizations are constituted as networks of social practices. Fairclough (2010) said that sociocultural practice is a relationship between heterogeneous textual features, discourse processes' complexity, and sociocultural change processes.

A piece of discourse is embedded within the sociocultural practice at several levels. Those are situational, institutional, and societal levels. As Wodak & Meyer (2016) explain, the analysis of the third dimension of a discursive event – that of social practice – relates to the different levels of social organization: the situation, the institutional context, the wider group, or the social context.

A situational level is in the immediate situation. Fairclough describes four main dimensions of the situation: what is going on (activity, topic, purpose), who has been involved, what relationships are at issue, and what the role of language is in what is going on (Fairclough, 2010).

An institutional level is on the broader institution or organization (Fairclough, 2010). Darma (2014:159) explains that institutional practice context is broader than situational context. The media affects the news results, social or certain power, and politics, i.e., specific media politics, media economics, or media culture. Fairclough (2013) describes that a social institution is (amongst other things) an apparatus of verbal interaction or an 'order of discourse.' He regards an institution as a sort of 'speech community,' with its repertoire of speech events describable in terms of the types of 'components' which ethnographic work on speaking has differentiated – settings, participants (their identities and relationships), goals, topics, and so forth. Each institution has its own set of speech events, its norms for their combination – for which cast members may participate in which speech events play which parts. In these settings, in pursuing which topics or goals, for which institutionally recognized purposes. It is necessary to see the institution simultaneously facilitating and constraining its members' social actions (verbal interaction). It provides them with a frame for action without which they could not act, thereby restraining them from acting within that frame. Moreover, every such institutional frame includes formulations and symbolizations of a particular set of ideological representations: ways of talking are based upon particular 'ways of seeing.'

A societal level is in the larger society (Fairclough, 2010). Fairclough (2010) states that a societal order of discourse is a particular structuring of constituent institutional orders of discourse, and given structuring may be de-structured during the social struggle. There are three explanations for social analysis in sociocultural practice: situational, institutional, and societal. Furthermore, Fairclough (2010) describes that a piece of discourse is embedded within the sociocultural practice at several levels: the immediate situation, the broader institution or organization, and the social level.

Based on the explanation above, The Washington Post's account of how Muslims were represented in the 2017 Jakarta Governor election illustrates the connection between discursive and social processes.

i. Situational

In the immediate situation, The Washington Post represents 'Muslim' in the Jakarta Governor election 2017 in four main dimensions of the situation: what is going on (activity, topic, purpose), who has involved, what relationships are at issue, and what is the role of language in what is going on? It is described in the following analysis. The analysis is in the four main dimensions of the situation.

The analysis is divided into activity, topic, and purpose in the dimension of what is going on. The Washington Post represents Muslims in the activity context in the Jakarta Governor election 2017, mostly in harmful activities. The activity can be presented in data 1 that Muhammad al-Khaththath, a Muslim leader of the hard-line Muslim Community Forum, held a court on the top floor of a Jakarta fast-food joint. According to an article titled "Jejak Al Khaththath, Caleg Gagal yang Coba Gulingkan Jokowi" in CNN Indonesia, Muhammad al-Khaththath is a failed legislative candidate who is suspected of intending to overthrow the Jokowi government, making his actions detrimental to the Jakarta Governor election (Akbar, 2017). The Washington Post represents the activity as a negative based on the article "Polisi: Al-Khaththath Cs Matangkan Rencana Makar di Dua Tempat" in Media Indonesia online newspaper (Irwanto, 2017). Police reveal that Muhammad al-Khaththath cs held a meeting twice in Kalibata, South Jakarta, and Menteng, Centre of Jakarta, to finalize the plan of overthrowing the government. As the hard-line Muslim Community Forum leader, it can be analyzed that Muhammad al-Khaththath, has a negative representation in the activity context.

Regarding topic context, Muslims are represented as a winner of an April 19 runoff election for governor of Jakarta. The topic can be presented in data 7: the preferred candidate, fellow Muslim Anies Baswedan, defeated the Christian incumbent, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, after a campaign laden with religious overtones. Referring to the article titled "Ini Hasil Rekapitulasi Suara Putaran Kedua Pilkada D.K.I. Jakarta" (the result of the runoff election for governor of Jakarta) in Kompas online newspaper is achieved by the third candidate pair, Anies Baswedan-Sandiaga Uno, in 57,96 percent of the vote

(Nailufar, 2017). It represents that the Muslim defeats the non-Muslim candidate.

Based on the context of data 3, Muhammad al-Khaththath said three things: Sharia would become the law of the land, non-Muslims would lose their leadership posts, and thieves who follow Islamic law would have their hands lopped off. He wants to apply Islamic law to the Indonesian government, as stated in the article "Jejak Al Khaththath, Caleg Gagal yang Coba Gulingkan Jokowi" in CNN Indonesia online newspaper. In line with him, many other Islamic organizations, such as Front Pembela Islam (FPI), has ever produced a shariah Indonesia discourse aiming to apply Islamic law in Indonesia (Akbar, 2017). In conclusion, Muhammad al-Khaththath, as a Muslim, is represented as an agent hoping the loose leadership posts of non-Muslims.

ii. Institutional

On the broader institution or organization level, The Washington Post represents 'Muslim' in the Jakarta Governor election 2017. The institution can be presented in data 39 that Marcus Mietzner, an associate professor at Australian National University, expressed concern that heavy-handed charges would harm Indonesia's democracy. Based on the previous data in data 9 that moderate Muslims who worry that conservative Islamists are wrecking Indonesia's tradition of religious tolerance, hard-line Islamist groups are represented as harming Indonesia's democracy.

iii. Societal

At the societal level, which is in the larger society, The Washington Post represented 'Muslim' in the Jakarta Governor election in 2017. In data 24, the community can be presented that moderate Muslim and civil society groups are increasingly calling for bans on Muslim organizations that push to create a caliphate. It is referred to the article entitled "Selengkapnya: Penolakan Hizbut Tahrir di Berbagai Kota" in LTNNU Jawa Barat online newspaper. It is due to the dissolution of many activities of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, along with the urge for the government to dissolve organizations that carry the Khilafah issue or leadership based on Islamic Shari'a (<http://ltnnujabar.or.id/selengkapnya-penolakan-hizbut-tahrir-di-berbagai-kota/>). It can be analyzed that the representation of Muslims in a societal context is moderate, with civil society groups on the one hand and a banned Muslim organization on the other. It represents a conflict in Muslim society during the Jakarta Governor's election in 2017.

Society comments about Muslims in the event from the newspaper coverage. GlueBall on 5/8/2017 9:47 PM GMT+0700 comments: "Looks as if Islam is in doubt and needs "defending." That is why moderate Muslims have become irrelevant, and fundamentalist fanatics rule the religion." It represents that Muslims are irrelevant and rule the religion.

In data 18, Sidarto Danusobroto, a former speaker of the Senate and key adviser to the president, said: "I am not worried about the candidates who won. I am worried about the groups that supported them — the Islamic Defenders Front and Hizbut Tahrir." Furthermore, in data 19, Mohammad Nuruzzaman, head of strategic research for Ansor, a moderate Muslim youth movement working with the Police to break up hard-line Muslim gatherings, said: "Islam is different from how the Islamic Defenders Front portrays it." In the societal dimension, Muslims are represented as a hard-line and moderate group, each having a different portrayal.

## CONCLUSION

This study investigates the representation of 'Muslim' in The Washington Post online newspaper. The processes found in The Washington Post online newspaper article are material, mental, relational, and verbal processes. The verbal process is the most apparent, which is 15 data. The second one is material processes with 5 data, and then relational processes with 3 data. The slightest appearance is a mental process.

Moreover, there are no behavioral and existential processes. The total amount of data is 46 data. The representation of "Muslim" in the Jakarta governor election 2017 in The Washington Post online newspaper can be seen from the sociocultural practice context. The newspaper primarily negatively represents Muslims. Muslims are portrayed as conflict makers and winners in the event because of the non-Muslim candidate's offense. The Muslim society is described as having conflict, and hard-line Muslim communities want to apply Islamic law to the Indonesian government.

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