

SYMBOLIC CONVERGENCE IN A SOCIAL MOVEMENT: A CASE OF “PENGUMPULAN SATU JUTA KTP” BY TEMAN AHOK

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ABSTRACT

Internet plays an important role in modern social movements. One of the modern social movements succeeded in Jakarta was initiated by Teman Ahok named "Pengumpulan Satu Juta KTP Untuk Ahok". The article was a part of a larger research about cyberurban space in a social movement. Therefore, the research question was, "how was imaginaries in cyberurban space concept in "Pengumpulan Satu Juta KTP" social movement by Teman Ahok?" This study used the qualitative method. Data were collected using virtual ethnography method, with the observation of a video posted by Teman Ahok. Data were analyzed using Bormann's Fantasy Theme Analysis. The results of this study form in three fantasy themes that describe the comments about "Jakarta Butuh Kamu, Ayo Bergerak Sekarang" video. These themes are "goodwill has to be supported", "I am ready to support Ahok, but how?", and "Ahok is not fit to lead". All these fantasy themes are in favor of "it's difficult but it is possible" rhetorical vision. The fantasy themes have emerged, and rhetorical vision is formed that linked all the fantasy themes. It can be concluded; that symbolic convergence has taken place in the dissemination of "Jakarta Butuh Kamu, Ayo Bergerak Sekarang" video.

Keywords: *symbolic convergence, social movement, fantasy themes, rhetorical vision*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of space has attracted the attention of researchers in many fields. But in early studies, research about space was divided into two views; the first view was those who saw space as a physical place or real, a place where people can meet face to face. And the second view was those who saw space as the non-physical concept, a place that was constructed by another thing, such as language and meanings. Both of this view was known as the dualism of space (Crang & Trift, 2000). Today, with the help of information technology, people from all around the world are possible to connect and interact through the internet. This development brings out a new concept regarding space, called cyberspace. Early research about cyberspace tried to analyze cyberspace as a detached concept between online and offline world, a view that was known as digital dualism.

Online connection via cyberspace is initially seen as a substitute for face to face meetings. But not for long, people prefer to be connected through cyberspace than face to face. Use of the Internet becomes the integral part of our life and the main source in seeking and disseminating information. Lim (2015) has provided a new concept about the online and the offline world, which can no longer be seen in isolation, but rather as a single unit. Community interaction through digital and social media occurs daily, especially in urban areas, making people accepted the online world as part of their offline world. This concept of Lim is called cyberurban space. Cyberurban space states that for urban communities, the boundaries between the offline and the online world is increasingly blurred. One can switch between the online and the offline world, between digital and physical space, and do not consider one of the worlds are more important than others.

In today's era, the Internet also has an important role in modern social movements. The use of hash tags and online petitions facilitate community participation to support or reject an issue, and in some cases, online participation encourages the public to participate in the offline world (Lim, 2015). In Indonesia, the penetration of internet usage in 2015 had reached 28% of the total population (Kemp, 2015). Urban communities in Indonesia are increasingly dependent on the internet in almost all areas, including politics. In the political world, the function of the Internet in Indonesia ranging from political participation, which is visible from the presidential and vice presidential election in 2014, to political watch that oversees the performance of government. An improved function of the Internet has also touched the modern social movements, especially for the urban community in Jakarta.

One of the modern social movements that succeeded in Jakarta is initiated by Teman Ahok named "Pengumpulan Satu Juta KTP Untuk Ahok". This movement started in the midst of declining public trust in politicians and political parties (Wasesa, 2013). The Governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, or commonly called Ahok, was issuing policies and movements that attract public attention and given new hope to the people. In 2014, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama opted out of the Gerindra party who has helped him elected as Deputy Governor of DKI Jakarta (Aziza, 2014). Once out, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama certainly does not have a political party to go forward as a candidate in the 2017 Governor election. He then announced that he would be running as independent, without backup from any political party.

Seeing this situation and to support Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in 2017, some volunteers formed a community organization called Teman Ahok. The main activities undertaken by Teman Ahok is to collect one million identity cards (KTP) to support Ahok as an independent candidate if there is no political party supports him (Hutabarat, 2016). Calls to support Ahok are submitted by Teman Ahok through the internet with the help of social media and website. This social movement starts from www.TemanAhok.com website; then the message is disseminated through various social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, and Line. In addition to the collection of ID cards, Teman Ahok also opens offline posts in several shopping centers in Jakarta and other places that were opened by volunteers, as well as the courier pick up of ID cards for residents of the city who do not have time to come to the posts. In addition, to raise funds, Teman Ahok also held "Teman Ahok Fair" in 2016.

The use of online and offline combination is consistent with the concept of cyberurban space by Merlyna Lim (2015). According to Lim (2015), a social movement can be understood as whole views of online and offline media usage. Modern social movements cannot just focus on one medium alone and ignore the others. Lim (2015) also argues cyberurban space has a hybrid nature, which means a social movement will use both online and offline media and can switch between them very quickly. The social movements of collecting one million ID cards by Teman Ahok is interesting because they have fulfilled the concept of cyberurban space, and managed to meet the target of the movement in a relatively short time.

This research is a part of a larger research about cyberurban space in a social movement. Therefore, this paper goals is to answer the following questions: how is the implementation of cyberurban space in the imaginaries step of "Pengumpulan Satu Juta KTP" social movement by Teman Ahok? Findings from this paper could be used as a reference for other social movements in implementing cyberurban space concept to achieve their goals.

In her article, Lim (2015) has tried to understand about the social movement in relation to the offline and the online world. Social movements had a long history since early 1700 in America and England (Christiansen, 2011). Even though it was started as the democratic movement, in today's era social movement is no longer subjected to democratic acts. A social movement can have a local content, such as movement about rejecting waste disposal in an area. The goals of the social

movement are varied, starting from to improve political, culture, or social system in a community. Although very diverse, Christiansen (2011) has given several key points about social movement, they are (1) social movement campaigns have sustainable actions to achieve specific objectives, (2) every social movement have standard actions, such as protest, demonstrations, petition signings, etc., (3) there are display of eligibility, unity, large number of members, and commitment, to legitimize a social movement in publics.

Porta and Diani in Christiansen (2011) have provided a definition of social movements as a group of people who are involved in a conflict with the issues that have been identified with clear that linked through informal networks and share the same collective identity. The relationship between cyberurbanspace with social movements can be understood by looking at the social movement as social networks. In this case, social movements can be seen as a network of people who have the same goals and publicly express these objectives (Lim, 2014).

To understand the concept of cyberurban space and modern social movements, Lim (2015) has divided its analysis into three categories, namely: the imaginaries, practices, and trajectories of social movements. According to Lim (2015), a social movement can be divided into abstract and physical action, include both physical and cognitive side of society. The composition of these actions can be analyzed from its origins (in the realm of imaginary), through its development (which involves the practice of a culture of participation) to all the events that are interconnected along the trajectory of social movements.

Imagination is one of the important components that unite the community and facilitate their collective expression (Lim, 2015). A social movement starts from people's ability to imagine a better change or better future from the current state. Imagination is a process where people gather information about the current conditions as a result of past action and speculate about future conditions. Imagination is an activity that includes both physical as well as cognitive and also includes specific issues as well as everyday life. With so many ideas about a better future, the online media has turned into alternative means of expression. In extreme cases, the places in the offline world could have been guarded by the police, so that members of the public are not allowed to meet and exchange ideas. Vice versa, if the sensor from the government is limiting the use of the online world, then people will use the offline media, as a means of transmission of ideas. In fact, a social movement that is in the imagination stage will use both online and offline media, and it can switch between them very quickly. Lim (2015) has called this phenomenon as hybrid nature to cyberurban space.

One important element in a social movement is the formation of a collective identity and shared meanings. Thus, in a social movement, one challenge is to create and disseminate the meaning that can be understood by all involved in it. This collective identity will lead communities to collective action, which is where a group understands their environment and how they should act in that environment (Christiansen, 2011). Storytelling becomes a mean to make shared meaning and ultimately construct a collective identity. Normally in social movements, activists will create a story that is "us against them", where the antagonist and protagonist defined so that social movements can be accepted by their members. Through the story, the value will grow and shared within the group, and members can relate to other members to achieve a common goal (Christiansen, 2011). This story is not just a form of collective identity, but also to explain the origin of a social movement. The ability of communities to use their imagination and storytelling in social movements fits the symbolic convergence theory from Bormann.

Symbolic convergence theory was developed by Ernest Bormann, a professor from the University of Minnesota. Bormann analyzes communication in small groups and observing the emergence of leadership, decision-making, norms, and other components in the life of the group. From these observations, Bormann has concluded the main principle of the symbolic convergence theory is "sharing group fantasies creates symbolic convergence" (Griffin, 2012). Two important keywords in

this theory are convergence and symbolic. According to Suryadi (2010), convergence means merging personal meanings of symbols between two or more people. The proximity of this meaning will produce a similarity of meaning from one person to another. While symbolic means human activity in understanding, interpreting, and instill meaning to what is happening, and actions performed by others.

Bormann has said that humans are the social storyteller who uses symbols to share fantasies to arouse the enthusiasm of a group (Griffin, 2012). Bormann also mentions two key assumptions in symbolic convergence theory, namely (Suryadi, 2010): (1) reality is created through communication, through the attribution phrases that used by experience or knowledge gained, (2) individual meaning of symbols can converge to become shared reality. The reality in this theory is seen as the composition of narrative or story that explains how things should be trusted by members.

Bormann has also introduced a research method to test his theory that known as fantasy theme analysis (Suryadi, 2010). Key components in this method are: (1) Fantasy Theme, consists of messages to be shared and used in constructing fantasy chain. The central theme of the Symbolic Convergence Theory is fantasy, which can be viewed as an interpretation of real events in a creative, imaginative, and shared by members (Gyimothy, 2013). (2) Fantasy Chain, a chain of fantasy is always created after the dramatization of the message, which is a comment or statement that is narrated and spread by someone. Bormann has said the dramatization of a message can take many forms, such as anecdotes, puns, jokes, until myths, and legends of which can attract the attention of the listener (Gyimothy, 2013). Dramatization will encourage people to participate in the story, to spread the story, or add stories. With more and more people who participate, the conversations tempo will increase, and these groups will share the same emotional expression. A result of fantasy chain is shared fantasy theme. (3) Fantasy type is a stock scenario that repeated and again by the same characters or by similar characters. One of the characteristics in sharing of fantasies is fantasy type. (4) Rhetorical Visions, at this stage, a fantasy theme that originally developed in the group has widened out from the group. Because of these developments, the theme of fantasy turns into wider community fantasy, also called rhetorical community (Suryadi, 2010).

In short, symbolic convergence is accomplished by using a fantasy theme analysis. Fantasy theme is the interaction and discussions that took place during the formation of rhetorical vision. Thus, the role of fantasy theme analysis is to find evidence that the symbolic convergence has occurred. In achieving this, the evaluation criteria in the fantasy theme analysis will be based on three factors, namely: the symbolic convergence, the emergence of fantasy themes, and the formation of rhetorical vision.

Research with fantasy theme analysis can be applied in various fields, such as politics, media, organizational communication, and virtual communication. Aleman (2005) has examined the SeniorNet online discussion forum, an online community for the elderly. Aleman's research finds some fantasy themes in the forum. One is the fantasy of the "knight in shining armor", which is being debated between SeniorNet members who do not accept the concept of traditional love that dominated by men. Fantasy theme is demonstrated through various phrases and keywords, as well as the evidence of negotiations between members of SeniorNet. The other research is conducted by Hillyer (2008), which uses fantasy theme analysis to observed online forum Student Doctor Network (SDN). Some fantasy themes exist in this SDN forum. The themes of fantasy describe love of SDN community to medical school, the desire to provide feedback between students, dislike of certain types of medical students, an understanding of how to become a successful doctor and what is most important in life. The whole theme of this fantasy is part of rhetoric vision called "It is Still Worth It", which encourages the community of SDN to unyielding in their medical schools.

METHODS

This research used the qualitative approach. Sugiyono (2013) has described qualitative research based on the philosophy of post-positivism which the researcher as the instrument by using triangulation data collection, inductive data analysis, and the result is more emphasis on meaning rather than generalization. Type of research used is descriptive. This type of research aims to make a systematic description, factual, and accurate about the facts and nature of the particular object (Kriyantono, 2006). Data collected was using virtual observation method with the observation of social media accounts of Teman Ahok. In virtual observation, interview data and survey can be obtained from the information that had been circulating on the Internet, such as through social media or internet forum (Hine, 2015).

The social media observed in this study was Facebook, because Teman Ahok used Facebook fan page right after its formation. Other than that interview is also conducted with the representation of Teman Ahok to confirm data and research results. Data analysis technique used in this study was a method from Bormann, called Fantasy Theme Analysis. This article is a part of a larger study; therefore this article will only focus on one video published in July 2015 in Teman Ahok's Facebook fan page titled "*Jakarta Butuh Kamu, Ayo Bergerak Sekarang*". This particular video is chosen because it is the first video that goes viral on Facebook and consists of key messages relevant to symbolic convergence theory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Teman Ahok is a voluntary association founded a group of young people whose aims to help and "accompany" Jakarta Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) in realizing the New Jakarta. Today, Teman Ahok focuses in collecting ID cards of Jakarta citizens in order to support Ahok become an Independent Candidate Governor of Jakarta in 2017. Teman Ahok was founded by a group of youth and not a public figure and has no affiliation with any political interest. Founders of Teman Ahok are Amalia Ayuningtyas, Singgih Widiyastono, Aditya Yogi Prabowo, Muhammad Fathony, and Richard Saerang (Teman Ahok, 2015).

Amalia Ayuningtyas, in an interview, said the reason for the formation of Teman Ahok after seeing Ahok figure who venture out of the political parties (Gerindra) and dared to fight members of the Jakarta City Council on budget-related issues. The founders of Teman Ahok view that Ahok has qualities and values that needed by Jakarta, so it deserves to be supported back in the 2017 General Election. Without the support of political parties, Teman Ahok tries to provide alternatives for Ahok to advance on an independent path in 2017. Ahok is seen as transparent, clean, and independent so that Teman Ahok also moves on the basis of these values.

An initial movement of Teman Ahok started in March 2015 and had not been focused on the collection of ID cards. It was a creative campaign with the theme "Lawan Begal APBD" and was held in conjunction with the car free day in Sudirman. But this creative campaign lasted only two times in the car free day. This is because of the prohibition by Ahok that car free day event is free of political content (Belarminus, 2015). Upon such termination, Teman Ahok started thinking about more serious support in the form of a real movement to support Ahok in 2017. The seriousness was started by studying the requirements for independent candidates by the General Election Commission (KPU). At the time, the requirement is 7,5% of the population in Jakarta, or about 750,000 ID cards so that a candidate can progress from the independent path. Seeing this amount, Teman Ahok started collecting

one million ID Cards movements for Ahok. One million was preferred because it was easier to socialized and exceed the requirements of the KPU.

At the beginning of the ID cards collection, there are only 15 organic posts (originated from people's homes) with two volunteers at every post. At this time, Teman Ahok started using social media, Facebook, and Twitter as a medium of information dissemination to the public. After organic posts, Teman Ahok began to open a post in Emporium Pluit Mall. During the two-weeks trial period, around 1000 people came and gave their identity cards per day. This amount was considered very unusual because all the information is only relying on social media. After several posts established at the mall, Teman Ahok started making the animated video that told about the height of one million ID cards may exceed the National Monument (Monas). This video titled "*Jakarta butuh kamu, ayo bergerak sekarang*" and was published on Facebook in July 2015. The key message conveyed in this animated video is the urgency for citizens of Jakarta to give their ID card as soon as possible. This was the first video distributed via social media and became viral. In Facebook, this video gains 16K reactions, 5,2K comments, and 410K views.

Analysis of this particular video with varying numbers of comments shows the presence of a few interesting fantasy themes. Most of the themes center on supports for Ahok and questions about how to give their ID card for Ahok. A few character types present in the video. The heroic character is Ahok himself that seen as brave and controversial. Common villains are individuals or parties who pose a threat to Ahok. These people range from corruptors to political parties. The requirement from General Election Commission (KPU) and the timeline is also included in the video. The purpose of it was to persuade people that it is truly an urgency to support Ahok. Most of the comments in the video are questions to Teman Ahok about the location of their posts. It signifies that there is strong support from Jakarta citizens to give a copy of their ID card for Teman Ahok. A rhetorical vision of "it's difficult but possible" is presented in the fantasy themes of this video.

The fantasy themes "Goodwill has to be supported" support this rhetorical vision. This fantasy is marked by fantasy types, featuring symbolic cues such as "*maju terus*", "*Ahok berani*", and "*masa depan Jakarta lebih cerah*". This fantasy theme arises because most of Jakarta citizens had experienced first hand of Ahok's policy to make Jakarta a better city. For example is the comment from Adriel: "In the hands of the leadership of Mr. Ahok, Jakarta has a brighter future. Jakarta is currently better, please continue Mr. Ahok, do not hesitate, the vicious for the good of the future will be better. Do not be like those who speak sweet words to hide his personality". Another example, a comment from Arianto: "Come on citizens of Jakarta, collect your ID card to support Ahok in eliminating corruption".

Supports for Ahok come not only from Jakarta citizens but also from people resided outside of Jakarta. Many comments are interested in having a leader or Governor like Ahok in their region. Some examples of supporters from outside Jakarta are comment from Supadana: "I am in Bali, and we support Ahok". Another comment from Firman: "I need Ahok in Medan (North Sumatera) and for a better Indonesia". And from Cah Solo: "I will help to reshare this video because I do not have Jakarta ID". This fantasy theme emerges often in the comment section, with diverse symbolic cues and most commonly associated with their support for Ahok.

Another fantasy theme that is most common in the comment section is "I am ready to support Ahok, but how?" This theme is marked by questions regarding the location of Teman Ahok posts, the requirement of ID card, and how to give a copy of their ID card to Teman Ahok. This theme emerges because viewers noted that there is little information in the video regarding of how to submit their copy of ID card. The key message of urgency is sensed by viewers, but because of lack of information, they ask questions in the comment section. Some examples of this questions are from Chrisfenty "I am in Palmerah, where do I submit my ID?", from Lenny: "For everybody who asked the same questions,

please give a detail instruction where and how we submit our ID?”, and from Louis “Where is the nearest Teman Ahok posts from Tanjung Priok? I am 100% supporting Ahok”.

The last theme that emerges is “Ahok is not fit to lead”. Few comments around this theme view Ahok as not fit to lead because of ethnicity and religious background. Another view is Ahok’s temperament and rude language as reasons why he is not fit to lead Jakarta. Example a comment from Haikal: “I am Moslem, and the majority in Jakarta are Moslems, that is why we need the leader who is Moslem. Thank you”, and from Yohanes: “Who is Ahok? The one who are very emotional and temperamental? Is there no one else better in Indonesia?” Among these negative comments, there are some who disagree and replied to these comments. For example a comment from Jacky: “Polite language is not guaranteed to work well. Performance is a guarantee, go ahead Ahok does not back down. There are still millions of people who support you. Ahok bravo!” The ratio of negative comments is around 1 in 30 comments, although this theme emerges, it is safe to say that it is not the majority.

All these fantasy themes are in favor of “it’s difficult, but it's possible” rhetorical vision. Most of the viewers understand that to achieve one million ID card in favor of Ahok is difficult but possible with teamwork, and they concerned with resharing the video. Briefly, from the above analysis, the fantasy themes had emerged, and rhetorical vision was formed that linked all the fantasy themes. And fantasy types also had formed, marked by diverse symbolic cues. So it can be concluded that symbolic convergence has taken place in the dissemination of “*Jakarta Butuh Kamu, Ayo Bergerak Sekarang*” video.

The Bormann’s fantasy theme analysis used in this research provides three fantasy themes that effectively describe the comments about “*Jakarta Butuh Kamu, Ayo Bergerak Sekarang*” video. These themes are “goodwill has to be supported”, “I am ready to support Ahok, but how?”, and “Ahok is not fit to lead”. They all give examples of community values, likes, and dislikes. The “goodwill has to be supported” theme is about supports for Ahok from Jakarta citizen and even people from outside of Jakarta. This theme emerges because of Ahok’s policy in making Jakarta a better city, and a lot of citizens viewed Ahok as transparent and brave enough to fight corruptors. While the “I am ready to support Ahok, but how?”, the theme is about questions regarding how to submit a copy of ID card to support Ahok. This theme arises because there is no information regarding how to submit ID card in the video. While the last theme is “Ahok is not fit to lead”. This theme is low in numbers, and consists of opinions why Ahok is not fit to lead Jakarta, mostly because of his temperament, ethnicity, and religious background.

According to Bormann, rhetorical vision is a unified putting-together of the various scripts which gives the participants a broader view of things (Griffin, 2012). Evidence of rhetorical vision is proof of shared values and goals within a community. Rhetorical Vision links all the fantasy themes and types in a certain way. A rhetorical vision emerges in relation to all the fantasy themes above is “it’s difficult but possible”. Most of the viewers understand that to achieve one million ID card in favor of Ahok is difficult but possible with teamwork, and they concerned with resharing the video.

CONCLUSIONS

In social movements, activists will create a story so that social movements can be accepted by their members. Through the story, the value will grow and shared within the group, and members can relate to other members to achieve a common goal (Christiansen, 2011). Teman Ahok uses this storytelling method through their video. The use of animation and video confirms that they need stories to relate to their members. After the story is made, Teman Ahok needs to expand and confirm

that their members have the same vision. They expand this story through online media (Facebook fan page and website) and also through offline media (Teman Ahok fair and offline newspaper). The use of both online and offline media is consistent with cyberurban space concept from Lim (2015). Fantasy theme analysis is used to confirm that members of Teman Ahok social movement had the same vision. A rhetorical vision emerges as a result of fantasy theme analysis called “it is difficult but possible”. This vision is in line with Teman Ahok stories, that “together, we can support Ahok”.

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