

COMMUNICATION DIMENSIONS WITHIN SPIRITUALITY COMMUNICATION: THE QU'RAN PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

The study aims to investigate the communication concepts introduced by the Qur'an. As the holy book of Moslem, the Qur'an explain many concepts of human daily life, including communication. Communication as sending and communication as reading in the modern communication theory can be elaborated in Qur'an perspective. This study identifies communication-related verses and analyzes the models of communication. The models are elaborated by examples from the Qur'an and the Hadith. Using interpretive paradigm, this research uses the Qur'an as the analysis unit to explore the patterns, models, and issues of communication. The result of this research contribute to develop eastern perspective theory of communication.

Keywords : *Qur'an, communication, interpretative paradigm*

INTRODUCTION

Up to now, study of Koran within communication contexts and dimensions of life was still few, if not was said rarely and scarcely. According to Fazlur Rahman (1980), if it will be done well, it must be advantages for Moslem around the world. Even Koran was presented as an integrated way and cohesively for people. They will obtain and get the best appreciation in understanding the whole and the substance as well as its meaning of Koran. Many have studied it intensively with stressing some of views that has developed valuable either for Moslem or non-Moslem.

Those who have scrutinized Koran as the important thing more seriously were Muhammad Marmaduke; Pickthall; C.H. Becker; and A Jeffrey. In his writing,

Marmaduke focused his study in searching the meaning of the glorious of Koran. Jeffrey was more interested to materials for history of text of Koran. They have dedicated to Islam and Koran for purposeful.

Therefore, study of spirituality communication that derives from Koran was very interesting in communication domains and communication study. Beside it is still rarely, but also scarcely in related to the main sources within Islamic traditions especially Koran and Assunah. Although, it seems to like this, some scholars give a serious attention for subject matters of Koran.

Japanese scholar T Izutsu for instance has written about Islam in which

related to Koran. Izutsu wrote *The Structure of Ethical Terms in the Quran*. This then was revised into *God and Man in The Qur'an* as new perspective when it was published as new edition later. Izutsu analyzed it by observing semantics. As we know, study of semantics can be understood well via semiotics. We also recognized that Thomas O'Shaughnessy published *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in The Koran* (Rahman, 1980).

As we understand, Koran has an important position for Moslem. Koran was also mentioned as *Kalamu-Allah* that has meaning of Allah's Messages. It was given to Muhammad as a prophet to warn and tell to people. People must have commitment to obey what Allah order or avoid to what Allah forbid. Relation between Allah and Muhammad as a prophet has been creating the high involvement interactions. For long time, it has been creating history and tradition within Islamic practices as they were implementing of mission of Koran in their life.

Kalamu-Allah can be seen as Allah's message that indicates the available of several ways of interaction among Allah and Muhammad, Allah and people and; Muhammad and people. The major themes of Koran involve many aspects of life that determine of the characteristic of society. On the other words, relations that take place have created communication. Its

characteristics of communication within spirituality context was influenced by religion.

Here we are our position. This article was aimed to explore and map the categories that it can be found in Koran. In communication fields, many scholars have been giving attention for these areas. They acknowledge that characteristics of human communication were influenced the philosophy, culture and including the religion. They believe that tenets of religion affect prominently for society. The Feelings, norms, believes, and attitudes frequently were directed and controlled by religion. Islam, Koran and communication were inter-related. The power of Islam can be manifested by power of communication. Koran voices the justice, truth, principle of life, life orientation, motivation, moral, ethics, history, family, and so on. Communication plays an important role in shaping the color, nuances and quality of life.

DISCUSSION

Several ways can be used to conceive the communication as the field. Dennis K Mumby (1997) conceives communication as the fields into the four discursive practices. It means that each scholar actually participates within scientific discourse for subject matter definitely. Each joins to this forum

exchanging ideas. As the phase, the joint action in turn created the scientific community that met and discussed some topics.

The first discursive practice is discourse of representation or positivist version of modernism. Here scholars make a sharp position between knower and known. Second position is the discourse of understanding. Many called it as interpretive modernism. This perspective explained that reality must be perceived as result of interactions. Third category is discourse of suspicion. In this tradition, scholars claimed their own positions as structural approaches in Critical Studies. Fourth, discourse of vulnerability or post-modernism.

The other way to study communication is based on level of communication. It covers four levels of communication: interpersonal communication, group communication, organizational communication and mass communication (Littlejohn, 2002). Of course, discussion about spirituality communication can be taken place at any level communication. It is not merely happened in the interpersonal communication per se but also group communication even organizational communication.

Spirituality communication, in turn, express the genuine nature of

communication that was dealing with religion practices, in this context, related to Koran as the most important sources for Moslem in the world. In Indonesia, study of spirituality communication was frequently under average, compared by study of mass communication or organizational communication. It maybe taking place in many places in the world not only in Indonesia. We suffer fruitful materials for spirituality communication while we need to explore it properly.

In reality, we must acknowledge that during long time period, communication scholars have been adopting the point of views from western. Western perspectives dominated worldview of communication. And for a long time, we accepted it without reserving critically. From this point, awareness to grasp the spirituality communication in Islam is one of necessities to catch another perspective of communication. Wilbur Shcramm himself said that communication was a fragmented discipline. So it has the possibilities to develop larger and more interesting.

However, recently, many scholars from Eastern perspectives tried to conceive the root of communication with eastern perspectives. It is more suitable with our own condition, nation and culture. Several publications to point the awareness can be mentioned to what G. Wang and V. Shen

(2000) was done. Both tried to searching for meaning for Asian communication theories. Figure like Ishii (2000) also tried to exit from domination. He developed the study that concerned to communication in which based on Buddhist perspectives.

For Indonesia, the growth of communication study can be said making progress rapidly. Many reputable universities have been holding any level of programs including PhD programs for communication. But, most of them still focused at mass communication. It is rarely developing programs for spirituality communication.

According Lawrence Kincaid (Littlejohn, 2002), there are the four distinctions that can be noticed when we compare communication between point of western views and eastern views. First, eastern perspective tends to focus the wholeness and unity. Eastern tends to secure harmony and group. Western perspective tends to see communication as partiality and not integrate it to be one unit. Therefore, western perspective is more individualistic orientation than group or collectivity within eastern perspective.

Second, eastern perspective sees the result as unplanned product and not sees as scientific processes. Western perspective sees the result of communication as planning, mission, and scheduling consequences as well as intended

orientation. Third, eastern perspective was dominated by nonverbal communication, indirect, implicit and intuitive. While western perspective tend be dominated by verbal communication and explicit. Fourth, eastern perspective conceive relation at any level of positions was more difficult that western perspective. Eastern perspective considers roles and status that involve in communicator more complex. While western perspective tends to see this relation among communicators more equal.

Actually, the characteristics differences between eastern and western perspective was more affected by philosophical bases including religion. India, Tibet, China, Korea, East Asia and Southeast Asia including Indonesia were the region that belongs the culture in which was affected by philosophical system and religion. These religions covered the broader sense of scope and domain as follow as Hindu, Budha, Tao, Zen, and Islam.

While Europe and United States of America have been a long time affecting by Yunani philosophical system and Judeo-Christianity religion system (Kim, in Samovar and Porter, 2003: 438). Therefore, eastern perspective and western perspective must be different each other. These system differ the style and performace of communication for each nation in the world.

Principally philosophical and religion system affected the way of looking to universe, understanding to the space and time, as well as knowledge and science. In turn, all that was mentioned affected the way they behave in everyday of life including communicating to the others. Within philosophical and religion from western perspective for instance, discover that universe has dualistic, materialistic and lifeless.

Dualistic means that God was a part from universe. God created universe by attaching inherently the law and regularity. Man must learn this law of universe and the pattern of regularity. Thus, God and universe was separated. God and reality was a part from each other. However this perspective also perceive that all material in the universe are lifeless. Man himself has to find out the law of nature, and develop it become the knowledge and science. Therefore, western tends to develop knowledge more empirical approaches than eastern.

While within eastern philosophical system explained that God and universe was holistic, dynamic and spiritualism. In this meaning, holistic can be articulated as unity. God and universe can't be separated. God always exist at any situation and phenomena. God always intervenes toward any situations that human being has. Therefore, eastern perspective tends the

phenomena more spiritualism than western. Eastern perceives that universe and all material in the universe are a life of organism that has very broad sense, multi-dimensional and one element to another element affecting each other. Cosmic regularly can be noticed as self contained and self organizing.

As Campbell (1990) told that Eastern people like India, Japan, Tibet, China, Indonesia and Korea tend thinking mystics. Mystery involves within ourselves. Finding God does not within ourselves, but at all materials of universe. They tried to take inferences through intertwin between spiritualism and things. This perspective shows us that everything is liquid, constantly changing, and impermanent. They believe that all the static forms as maya or impermanent. Finally, God control over the universe himself.

The way of looking toward the universe automatically affected the point of views to the knowledge and science. Eastern perspectives clearly was less dualistics in epistemology than western. In eastern, process to know, tends more syntetic than analytic. Thus, the ultimate goal of knowledge was transended it to the power of God and related it to the unity and harmony. They should balance between *ying* and *yang*.

For western, through dualitistic views, they develop the knowledge based

on rationality. They separated between knower and known. To know the law of nature and universe, they avoid to fuse knower and known. The objectivity become the priority in finding the truth of knowledge. Thus, western thinking develops rationality that involve categorization, linear clarify, logic analytic and apply the sylogism principles.

Philosophical and religion system also influence eastern and western perception to time. Everything happened within time and space. No events took place without duration and longevity. Terms of today, yesterday and tomorrow describe the situation where an event happened. Today indicates the situation that we have. So many feel that today is a gift. Yesterday indicates an event that pass away and it can't be set back. Many argued that yesterday become history. Whatever happend yesterday, one can't return to what situation that they desire. While future is still mystery. None can predict what will happen next time.

For eastern perspective, they valued time as a thing that can't be changed. Each of events has time to happen, when, who, why and what kind of events involve in this situation. Each of us has destiny to obtain to what will be happened as necessary. In this context, time is cyclic process in which upon time occupying at top position, but the other time occupying the below position.

This perspective believes that each has an opportunity get the best or the worst position. In other word, God has power to destiny when and how it will be taking place.

Western perspectives disagree to the eastern view toward the time. According western perspective, time is linear. There is no situation that will have the same. Each of events must be different one another. Therefore, western thinking was more optimistic than eastern. Thus, what had happened in the past time, did not necessary to wait anymore. Because it had become history. In other word, eastern perspective sees the time as polychronic, while western sees it as monochronic.

The differences of worldview between eastern and western must be noticed as consequences the differences of philosophical and religion system. The way of looking, in turn, affected to the way individu behave, communicate and interact. These also affected the style of thinking and communicating. How they perceive the self: who they are or who she is or who he is- was more influenced by philosophical and religion system. Articulation that determine the self is an important thing in communication fields.

CONCLUSION

As the results, we can find out that the way Asia people communicate to the

others more implicitly- high context. While western tends directly and straight to the point of the subject matters that we recognize it as low context (Hall, 1983). Therefore, differences between eastern and western enlarge the landscape and scope of the study of communication. Many have known that the domain of communication fields covered in the broad sense. We recognise family communication, group communication, political communication, cultural communication, spritualism communciation, interpersonal communication, mass communication etc.

At this point, this paper will explore more deeply concerning spiritualism communication by investigating Koran as main source. We believe by doing research more accurately, we try to find out the principles of communication; expose the major themes of Koran in articulating communication dimensions; describing level of communication and ethic of communciation. We also believe that these efforts will encourage the other scholars to do the same. Finally we wish it will be more purposeful for our tradition of communication in Indonesia especially for moslem as whole.

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