

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Abdullah Gymnastiar, also known as Aa' Gym (Aa' means big brother in Sundanese), has begun his career as a dai since 2001. His debut began when he was invited to give a preaching in Nuzulul Quran celebration that was held in Istiqlal Mosque. This celebration was also attended by the President and State Officials. Since then, he became a famous da'i. Many television programs, radio, newspaper and others media invited him as their guest or expert for their preaching programs. Then, Aa' Gym often performed in many off-air programs. People could easily listen and read his preachings. The charisma in the way he delivered preaches has successfully impressed many people.

His charisma is not the only aspect that could make his followers, or called *jama'ah*, feel impressed. There are still other aspects such as the topic discussed and his simplicity in his performances. In delivering preaches, the importance of family is chosen as the most topics discussed by him. Because of the reason, his preachings are easy to understand. As a da'i, Aa' Gym is considered to be the unique da'i. People are interested in the different concept that he offers in his preaching. He delivered preaches seriously but sometimes he combined it by giving some funny examples in order to make his *jama'ah* feel soothing. Besides becoming da'i, Aa' Gym is also an entrepreneur. Manajemen Qolbu Corporation

is the real evidence of his entrepreneur skills and innovation that he had. He was succeeded to manage and maintain his own company that used multi level marketing strategy while his activities in giving preach was increased. Aa' Gym tended to be the good role model for others people.

In the end of 2006, he suddenly became a very controversial person. He decided to take a second wife. Many people, especially women and his female followers were absolutely rejected and regretted this decision. For women, they felt that they had been harmed and cheated by the figure that they respected before. Women are afraid if their couple or husbands will imitate what Aa' Gym did. Because of his decision to do polygamy, there are a lot of pros and contras. So, this action of taking a second wife unfortunately made Aa' Gym's popularity decreases. From this point, Aa' Gym became a controversial person because media reports his action all the time. This causes his *jama'ah* to leave him.

Polygamy becomes a hot issue to be discussed in Indonesia recently. Polygamy is a marriage in which one man has more than one wife. According to conservative Muslim, polygamy is a husband's absolute right and that man is legally free to exercise it, provided he follows the limit of maximum number of wives at any time (Nurlaelawati, 2007). Although this marriage is laid down in Al-Qur'an and is allowed under the Islamic law, the various interpretations of the verses concerning polygamy seem to influence the different opinions of the society. The parties who support it argue that polygamy is permitted as long as they could fulfill the stipulation. Furthermore, polygamy is considered to be better than having mistresses. While the parties who are against polygamy argued that

the stipulation of polygamy is hard to fulfill. Because of the reason, they think that this marriage is impossible to be conducted. The controversy of polygamy does not only happen in Indonesia but also in various Muslim countries. For example, polygamy is permitted to do in Syria if the court is satisfied that the man is financially able to maintain multiple wives properly. But in Tunisia, polygamy is prohibited (Nurlaelawati, 2007).

In Indonesia, the issue of polygamy has attracted considerable attention from people in the society for a long time. There are still pros and contras. For example, the ratification of Marriage law in 1974, the Indonesian Government did place boundaries on the practice of polygamy by giving a number of conditions that must be done by man before taking polygamy marriage. Recently, polygamy marriage is often to be discussed especially when many media reported about the polygamy marriage that conducted by public figures such as Bambang Tri-Halimah and Mayang Sari.

During the absence of Aa' Gym in public, many speculations aroused and made the matter more complicated. One of the famous talk show programs, *Kick Andy*, invited him to be the guest star. Andy F. Noya, as the host, interviewed him in order to know the true reason of this controversial polygamy. This program can be considered as a medium for Aa' Gym to clarify all of the public questions about his decisions to do polygamy. He fully realized that his position as a public figure, especially as a da'i, required him to always become a good role model in society. However, he responded to all of people's questions about his polygamy carefully.

Both of Aa' Gym and *Kick Andy* availed this talk show as medium for gaining their own purposes. The appearance of Aa' Gym in *Kick Andy* is considered to make people understand about the reasons of why he did polygamy. For *Kick Andy*, his appearance was aimed to increase this talk show rating. According to van Dijk (1995), press has power to persuade the readers or audiences. This power is particularly effective if its reporting is consistent with the interests of the most readers or audiences. The appearance of Aa' Gym in *Kick Andy* tend to attract audience to watch this talk show program especially for people who are curious about Aa' Gym.

During the talk show, Aa' Gym answered all questions carefully in order to consider people's feelings, especially when the host asked about his polygamy action. The questions were not answered directly. He often gave answers in figurative speech. According to Lakoff and Johson (1980) figurative speech or figurative language, specifically, metaphor and simile, helps us understand their relationship by comparing them to other phenomena.

The persuasive power of the press is particularly effective if its reporting is consistent with the interests of the most readers or audiences (van Dijk, 1995). The appearance of Aa Gym in *Kick Andy* is considered to attract the remarkable of his *jama'ah* after his absence in public for a year. Then, his speech in answering the question tended to persuade the audiences to understand reasons of his polygamy.

Polygamy could be the social issues to be discussed because there are lots of pros and contras emerging when people discussed it. The use of figurative speech in Aa' Gym's utterances might be his consideration in order to not emerge pros and contras in his polygamy responses. Because of that, figurative speech is chosen as the tool for analyzing this study.

Recently, there are several studies that examine the figurative speech as their analyzing tool. The first study is Zubair in 2007. She analyses metaphor used by Pakistani women while talking about their literacies and selfhood. In her projects, 35 women from two villages of Southern Punjab where were interviewed regarding their literacy practices during 1996 to 1998. The finding indicated that although the rural women in the data considered literacy and higher education as empowering. Secondly, it is the study of Walker in 2003. By using the conceptual metaphor analysis, he compares editorials and opinions articles from news media organization in the UK, Japan, and the US in order to reveal the underlying political ideologies of the writers and explore whether evidence can be found to support the hypothesis that two fundamental systems of morality based on the ideal family underlie conservative and liberal worldviews. Then, he also compares the Western and Japanese corpora in order to explore the extent to which the use of conceptual metaphor analysis that reveal Japanese cultural values.

Moreover, Rahimi, A and Sahragard, R, (2006) studied about the Euphemization and Derogation in Emails on the Late Pope. They attempt to explain how a single reality, in this case is the death of the Pope, John Paul II, is

presented and viewed entirely differently by different people having a range of religious and political perspectives reflected in their emails.

Because of the reason, the writer is interested in exploring the euphemism, metaphor and repetition profusely used by Aa Gym in the *Kick Andy*. In particular, the writer is interested to identify the figurative speech used by Aa' Gym to respond all the questions given to him.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Based on the explanation above, the research question came up from the observations are the following:

1. What kinds of figurative speech are used by Aa' Gym in his responses to his polygamy issue in *Kick Andy*?
2. In responding to what question does Aa' Gym use figurative speech?

1.3. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to find out what the figurative speech often used by Aa' Gym in order to answer all questions toward his polygamy. Then, it is to find out how Aa' Gym tried to represent himself and polygamy issue based on his figurative speech that he used in the talk show.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is to enrich the audience knowledge about the use of figurative speech in public media like in talk show. The study also tries to give understanding how figurative speech is employed to respond to sensitive issues in public.

1.5. Definitions of Key Terms

Euphemism : Kinds of the figure of speech in which the speaker is considered to use another word to say something in order to be more polite. Then, it could make the audience be more persuaded (Keraf, 1985).

Figurative speech : Language using figure of speech, such as simile, hyperbole, metaphor, and so on to form imagery (Perrine, 1969, p. 65).

Metaphor : The simplest form, metaphor replaces one word to another, resulting in one concept representing another. This figure of speech does not state a comparison but it suggests a comparison (Keraf, 1985, p. 132).

Repetition : The figure of speech in which the speaker often repeat some word or sentences in order to focus on those word or sentences (Keraf, 1985).