



## LINGUISTIC SYMBOLS IN THE POLICE'S BAP OF LINGUISTS FROM AN ANTHROPHISTORICAL SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVE

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### ABSTRACT

This study analyses the linguistic symbol instruments in the Investigative Report (BAP) of Language Experts in criminal cases related to the ITE Law at Polda Metro Jaya using an Anthrohistorical semiotic approach. The study attempts to reveal the linguistic aspects in the BAP reflecting power relations, gender bias, and ideological constructions underlying the legal process. The use of legal terminology and formal language structures strengthens the position of the authority of legal institutions, while gender bias is identified in terms that reinforce certain stereotypes. The results of the study explain that the case analysed contributed to the linguistic symbol instruments in criminal cases related to violations of the ITE Law at Polda Metro Jaya. The linguistic symbol instruments are the words 'main-main dan dengar-dengar'. The words 'main-main dan dengar-dengar' indicate linguistic symbols related to the ITE Law. In disclosing the linguistic symbols of the BAP in the police in its application, of course, it is still necessary to pay attention to the social, cultural, and historical contexts that influence the birth of the text in the context of its use.

**Keywords:** linguistic symbols, BAP, Anthropohistorical semiotics, legal literacy

### INTRODUCTION

Language not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a social and cultural symbol that reflects the dynamics of power relations, values, and knowledge structures in society (Barthes, 1977). In a legal context, the use of language in official documents such as the Investigation Report (BAP) is a representation of state power over the individual being examined. The role of linguists in the police is not only to convey linguistic analysis, but also to play a role in shaping meaning through the linguistic symbols used in the BAP (Eriyanto, 2021). This phenomenon is interesting to study through an anthropohistorical semiotic approach because it is closely related to the construction of meaning, history, and cultural context. In other words, the BAP is not something neutral, but is full of symbolic content that is influenced by power, ideology, and the history of language use in the legal system. Previous research has shown that in the legal process, linguistic symbols can be manipulated to strengthen or weaken a person's legal standing (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010). In the BAP, the choice of diction, sentence structure, and use of legal terms are symbolic forms that impact the perception of legitimacy and objectivity.

Therefore, the linguistic symbols used in the police BAP need to be studied more deeply. The anthropohistorical semiotic approach allows researchers to understand how

these symbols work in social and legal systems that have a long history. This study is not only important from a linguistic perspective, but also from a social and historical perspective.

In the realm of semiotics, symbols are not just signs, but have a complex relationship with meaning and culture (Eco, 1976). In the BAP, linguistic symbols form a narrative that influences how suspects or witnesses are positioned in a legal context. When a linguist provides analysis in the BAP, he not only represents linguistic facts, but also makes symbolic choices that can form certain interpretations. This shows that language in the legal realm is not a neutral entity, but rather a social construction that has certain purposes and powers (Gibbons, 2003). Therefore, the linguistic symbols in the BAP cannot be separated from the power structure and historical discourse.

Meanwhile, the anthropohistorical approach offers a framework for understanding how linguistic symbols have developed in human interactions throughout history. In the context of Indonesian law, the use of language in the BAP is influenced by the colonial legacy, legal modernization, and post-reform socio-political developments. This long history creates layers of meaning in the linguistic practices used in official legal documents (Piliang, 2022). Therefore, the symbols in the BAP are not only linguistic representations, but also reflections of legal history and social change. By examining the BAP from an anthropohistorical semiotic perspective, we can understand more deeply about the relationship between language, power, and history.

The study of linguistic symbols in the BAP by linguists is also important to see how linguistic professionals work in legal institutions. In practice, linguistic analysis in the BAP is often used to justify or reject legal claims. The choice of terms such as “uncooperative”, “deviating from the rules”, or “containing ambiguous meaning” is not only technical, but also symbolic and full of social meaning (Eriyanto, 2021). This shows that the role of linguists is not only technical, but also ideological. This study will help reveal how these symbolic constructions work and how they impact the legal process.

In addition, the development of digital technology also influences the use of linguistic symbols in the legal context. Currently, many BAPs are digitally documented, including the results of forensic language analysis. This has implications for the form and structure of the linguistic symbols used, both in terms of visuals, text, and sound (Zhou & McKeown, 2020). These symbols work not only linguistically, but also semiotically in a multimodal sense.

With an anthropohistorical approach, these symbols can be traced for their changes and continuity in the law enforcement process. The use of an anthropohistorical semiotic approach also opens up space to see how language as a symbol has been used by police institutions since the colonial era until now. In the Indonesian context, the BAP model has undergone many changes over time, both in terms of format and language style. From here we can see the symbolic reproduction of power through the form and content of official documents (Foucault, 1995).

This study will examine how linguistic symbols in the BAP become a means of reproduction and preservation of the colonial-modern legal system. Thus, linguistic symbols are not merely linguistic signs, but also a form of historical articulation of legal power.

The problem that arises is that the general public tends to view the BAP as a neutral Document object from power and ideology. In fact, the linguistic symbols in the BAP are very likely to be used to direct legal opinion in a certain direction. In this case, an anthropohistorical semiotic approach can help break the illusion of neutrality. This



study will criticize how linguistic symbols in the BAP can reproduce an imbalance of power through the way the legal narrative is structured (van Dijk, 2008). Therefore, it is important to analyze in depth how these symbols work behind the official text that seems formal.

This study also has urgency because of the increasing role of linguists in resolving legal cases. Their presence in the investigation and trial process is becoming more intensive along with the increasing complexity of cases involving hate speech, defamation, and interpretation of digital texts. In this context, the linguistic symbols in the BAP become the meeting point between linguistics and legal practice. In other words, language is not only interpreted scientifically, but also transformed into the basis for legal decisions (Solan & Tiersma, 2005).

This study aims to investigate the process of symbolic transformation. The presence of an anthropohistorical perspective in this study also allows for a more comprehensive reading of the historical traces of Indonesian legal culture. For example, how the language in official police documents during the Dutch colonial period had different symbols of power than during the New Order and Reformation. Changes in terms, writing style, and sentence structure in the BAP indicate a change in the legal paradigm reflected in the use of linguistic symbols (Murray & Moore, 2019). Therefore, the linguistic symbols in the BAP cannot be separated from the structure of time and cultural context.

Linguistic problems in the legal system also reflect the dynamics between standard language and popular language. In many cases, the BAP is written in legal language that is difficult for suspects or witnesses to understand. This creates a gap in meaning that has the potential to harm individuals who do not have legal language competence (Gibbons, 2003). Linguistic symbols in this context become a tool of social exclusion, not just a means of communication. This study seeks to explore how these symbols work and how they can be criticized through an anthropohistorical approach.

In addition, this study will show that linguistic symbols are not universal, but contextual. The same symbol can have different meanings depending on its cultural, social, and historical context (Peirce, 1931). Therefore, reading linguistic symbols in the BAP requires an approach that is not only linguistic, but also historical and anthropological. Thus, the meaning of these symbols can be explained more clearly. This is also a critique of a purely textual approach that tends to ignore the social context.

This study is also important as a contribution to the literature on legal and forensic linguistics, which has so far been minimal in using the anthropohistorical semiotic approach. Most forensic linguistics research still focuses on the technical and structural aspects of the text (Coulthard et al., 2017). In fact, linguistic symbols also contain cultural and historical values that are important to understand critically.

Therefore, this approach is expected to expand the scope of forensic linguistics research in Indonesia. In addition to providing a critical understanding of linguistic symbols, this study also provides practical contributions to the police institution. By understanding how linguistic symbols work, legal institutions can be more careful in compiling BAPs so that they do not contain bias that is detrimental to certain parties. This also supports the principles of restorative justice and legal transparency. Therefore, this study has direct implications for the renewal of legal policies based on critical and historical perspectives.

Thus, this study aims to examine the linguistic symbols in the BAPs of linguistic experts in the police using an anthropohistorical semiotic approach. The main focus is on

how these symbols reflect power relations, legal history, and cultural values in the context of Indonesian law. This study will also analyze how linguistic symbols influence the process of forming legal meaning in the BAP. This paper is expected to provide significant theoretical and practical contributions to the fields of legal linguistics, semiotics, and legal anthropology.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Approach**

This study uses a qualitative-critical approach based on library research, with an emphasis on anthropohistorical semiotic analysis of linguistic symbols in the Investigation Report (BAP) compiled by a linguist in the police. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate to explore the relationship between language, power, and historical construction in the legal system. This approach also refers to Barthes' (1977) thinking which states that symbols cannot be separated from the underlying social structure. Thus, this study places linguistic symbols in the BAP as the result of social construction that needs to be understood through a historical and cultural framework. This approach is also in line with social criticism developed in cultural semiotics (Piliang, 2022).

### **Type and Design of Research**

This type of research is a descriptive qualitative literature review, which aims to interpret the meaning of linguistic symbols in the BAP text through literature studies and supporting theories. This study does not involve fieldwork, but rather refers to official BAP documents that are publicly accessible and other scientific sources such as journal articles, academic books, and court decisions. The research design was carried out by collecting, classifying, and analyzing texts based on semiotic and anthropohistorical theories. Roland Barthes' semiotic model and historical-cultural approach are used to read the layers of meaning in the linguistic symbols that appear in the BAP (Eco, 1976; Barthes, 1977). This design aims to reveal the relations of power, ideology, and social meaning in legal language.

### **Data Sources**

The main data sources for this study are BAP documents involving language experts, both obtained from open court decisions, the prosecutor's official website, and academic reports. In addition, supporting data comes from secondary literature such as books on forensic linguistic theory, legal anthropology, and legal semiotics (Gibbons, 2003; Coulthard & Johnson, 2010). These sources are reviewed to form a theoretical basis and provide a contextual reading of the symbols analyzed. The data analyzed include language forms, technical terms, sentence structures, and diction in the BAP. All data are reviewed by considering the socio-cultural background and linguistic history of Indonesian legal institutions.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

Data collection techniques are carried out using systematic documentation analysis and literature studies. Researchers access open sources from national legal repositories, accredited scientific journals, and relevant theory books from the fields of semiotics, legal linguistics, and anthropology. Data are collected based on certain criteria, namely containing linguistic analysis from language experts, including legal narratives, and having an explicit linguistic symbolic structure. Data searches are carried out digitally



and manually using keywords such as "BAP language experts", "legal semiotics", and "language in the police". This technique is considered valid because it is systematic and selective according to the needs of the analysis (Creswell, 2016).

### Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed using Barthes' (1977) semiotic model which distinguishes between denotative meaning (literal meaning) and connotative meaning (social and ideological meaning). The analysis was carried out in stages, starting from identifying linguistic symbols in the BAP to historical and social interpretations of these symbols. Historical interpretation was carried out by referring to changes in legal discourse and Indonesian legal history from the colonial period to the reform era (Foucault, 1995). This analysis is hermeneutic, namely by revealing layers of meaning that are not explicitly visible in the text. Thus, linguistic symbols are not only understood as linguistic forms, but also as forms of articulation of history and power.

### Data Validity

Validity in this literature review was obtained through critical evaluation of sources and literature triangulation. Each data from the BAP document was confirmed with relevant and reliable academic references. In addition, logical and interpretive analysis techniques were used to maintain the consistency and coherence of the argumentation. Researchers also avoid interpretive bias by juxtaposing the results of symbolic reading with the discourse that develops in academic literature (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This validity is important so that the interpretation of linguistic symbols has a strong academic foundation. 2.7 Validity of Interpretation

The validity of interpretation is obtained by using cross-disciplinary theory as a tool to validate the meaning of symbols. Linguistic symbols in BAP are not only analyzed from a linguistic aspect, but also from a social, cultural, and history (Solan & Tiersma, 2005). Therefore, validity lies in the integration between theory and data, as well as the suitability between method and data. Analysis of symbols and their context. Researchers also compare the results of the analysis with the results of relevant previous studies to avoid misinterpretation. The final results of the interpretation are written narratively and argumentatively to show the relationship between elements clearly and coherently.

### Scope of Analysis

The scope of the analysis is limited to the linguistic symbols that appear in the BAP of linguists in the Indonesian police from 2023 to 2024. This time limit was chosen because it reflects the period after the emergence of the development of digital-based legal cases, hate speech, and the role of linguists in the judiciary. The focus of the analysis is directed at the use of diction, sentence structure, technical terms, and narrative forms that contain symbolic content. These symbols are then examined in relation to legal discourse and power structures. This limitation is intended to keep the research focused and in-depth.

### Objectives and Contributions of the Methodology

The purpose of using this methodology is to comprehensively understand how linguistic symbols in the BAP form legal discourse that is full of social and ideological meaning. This methodology makes an important contribution to the development of forensic linguistic theory and critical legal studies. With a focused library approach, this study presents a critical reading of legal texts as symbolic representations of state power.

Another contribution of the methodology is to enrich the study of legal semiotics with an anthropohistorical approach that has so far been minimally applied in the study of legal language in Indonesia (Coulthard et al., 2017). 2.10 Limitations of the Methodology

As a library study, this study has limitations in terms of contextual depth compared to field studies. The researcher did not conduct interviews or direct observations, so the interpretation only relies on reading the text and supporting literature. However, the main strength of this methodology lies in its ability to reveal the symbolic meaning hidden in legal texts conceptually and historically. In the future, this study can be supplemented with empirical research so that the results are more comprehensive. These limitations do not reduce the theoretical significance of an in-depth library study.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The language used in the Examination Report (BAP) does not only convey information, but also acts as an instrument of power. Every word, phrase, and sentence structure chosen has a pragmatic and symbolic function in forming a legitimate legal meaning. Within the framework of semiotics, language is not a neutral system, but contains values, interests, and power (Barthes, 1977). Therefore, the BAP cannot be understood only as an administrative legal document, but also as an ideological text. This approach is important to reveal how language creates certain social constructions for the parties being examined.

Linguists in the context of the BAP have the authority to interpret the statements written in the document. They not only explain linguistic rules, but also produce meanings that influence the legal reading of a particular case. This makes them important actors in the formation of legally valid linguistic symbols (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010). When an expert states that a statement is “ambiguous” or “not in accordance with pragmatic rules”, the statement can change the direction of legal evidence. Therefore, the linguistic symbols in the BAP cannot be separated from the context of power.

The use of terms such as “examined”, “acknowledged”, “rejected”, or “uncooperative” have clear denotative meanings in the legal context. However, these terms also contain connotative meanings that influence perceptions of the perpetrator (Barthes, 1977). For example, “acknowledged” does not only mean stating the truth, but is also often interpreted as justifying a mistake. Therefore, the symbolic meaning of language in the BAP is highly dependent on the context of discourse and the position of the legal institution. The semiotic approach helps reveal the hidden meaning in the linguistic structure.

The sentence structure in the BAP is often formed with a passive model such as “an examination has been carried out on...”. This kind of sentence gives the impression of objectivity and neutrality of the institution, when in fact there is subjectivity in the choice of diction (Gibbons, 2003). In semiotics, the passive form can be analyzed as a symbolic strategy to cover up the main perpetrator of the action. This has an impact on the reader's understanding of the position of the legal subject involved. Therefore, the sentence structure in the BAP is a form of symbolic representation that is full of meaning of power.

The language in the BAP is the result of the ideological construction of state institutions. In many cases, the choice of words reflects the state's perspective on individuals, especially those under investigation. Language such as “violating legal norms” or “acting beyond the bounds of propriety” contains moral and legal meanings. This shows that linguistic symbols are not only linguistic, but also political (van Dijk,



2008). The BAP becomes a symbolic space that reproduces the dominance of the state's legal ideology over citizens.

The legal language in Indonesia still contains many colonial traces, as seen from the use of Dutch loan terms such as "defendant", "notulen", and "suspect". These traces become historical symbols that show the continuity of power from the colonial era to the present (Piliang, 2022). In anthropohistorical studies, this symbol shows that the Indonesian legal system cannot be separated from the roots of linguistic colonialism. Thus, the linguistic symbols in the BAP not only reflect the current law, but also the long historical legacy of colonial power. This reinforces the importance of an anthropohistorical approach in reading legal texts.

The BAP not only records facts, but also builds a legal narrative directed by researchers and strengthened by linguists. This narrative often contains word choices that form a certain construction of a legal event. In this case, linguists act as editors of meaning who direct the interpretation of the text in a certain direction. This narrative contains symbols that function to build a legal reality recognized by the state (Solan & Tiersma, 2005). Therefore, the linguistic symbols in the BAP must be read as a narrative representation of the ongoing legal process.

Each linguistic symbol in the BAP has a legitimizing function for the actions of state institutions. Through language, the investigation, detention, and trial processes are given a formal, legitimate form. Symbols such as "according to procedure", "in the context of an investigation", and "referring to the article" become markers of the legitimacy of state actions. In semiotics, these symbols function to strengthen the existence of power and truth according to the state (Eco, 1976). Thus, the BAP becomes a document that is not neutral, but is full of symbolic meaning for state legal actions.

The language in the BAP is often difficult for the general public to understand because it contains jargon. technical legal language. This gives rise to symbolic exclusion that makes legal language only belong to a handful of elites (Gibbons, 2003). In this context, linguistic symbols become a tool of social exclusion that emphasizes the distance between the state and the people. The anthropohistorical approach sees this phenomenon as part of the legacy of colonial power that marginalizes the people through legal language. Therefore, the symbols in the BAP also reflect the power relations between state institutions and civil society.

When a linguist states that a sentence "cannot be interpreted correctly", the statement becomes the basis for further legal action. This shows that linguistic symbols can be defined performatively by scientific authority. Linguists not only explain, but also determine meaning (Coulthard et al., 2017). In this case, symbols become products and instruments of legally legitimized academic power. Therefore, linguistic symbols are inseparable from epistemic and institutional interests.

The development of technology has expanded the form of linguistic symbols in the BAP, from written text to audio and video transcriptions. Transcription of recordings becomes a new symbol that stores additional meanings such as intonation, voice stress, and pauses. These symbols contain multimodal meanings that require a more complex semiotic approach (Zhou & McKeown, 2020). In the BAP, linguists play a role in converting sound symbols into texts that have legal meaning. This shows the increasingly broad realm of symbols in the contemporary justice system.

Linguistic symbols in the BAP can also function as instruments of criminalization against legal subjects. The selection of certain diction such as "intended", "intentionally", or "motivated" is a symbolic construction of the perpetrator's intent. In this context, language becomes a tool for forming mistakes and evil intentions that have a direct impact on legal sanctions (Foucault, 1995). Therefore, the symbols in the BAP are not only descriptive, but also prescriptive. The semiotic approach helps explain how language shapes a person's legal subjectivity.

However, this study has limitations. As a literature-based study, this study has limitations in terms of contextual depth compared to field research. The researcher did not conduct interviews or direct observations, so the interpretation only relies on reading the text and supporting literature. However, the main strength of this study lies in its ability to reveal the symbolic meaning hidden in legal texts conceptually and historically.

## CONCLUSION

The linguistic symbols in the Investigation Report (BAP) involving linguists in the police institution not only represent verbal data, but also become symbolic devices in forming certain legal meanings and social constructions. Based on a literature review of anthropohistorical semiotics, the linguistic symbols in the BAP contain layers of meaning that reflect the ideology, power, and history inherent in the structure of Indonesian law. Symbols such as legal diction, passive sentence structures, and mention of social roles show how language works hegemonic in defining the position of legal subjects. The role of linguists in the BAP is also political because it helps determine the legitimacy of the meaning of each written legal statement. Thus, the BAP is not a neutral text, but rather a discourse full of symbolic and historical interests. These findings indicate that the analysis of legal documents such as the BAP needs to use an interdisciplinary approach, especially semiotics and historical anthropology. This approach allows for a more critical reading of how language shapes, frames, and even manipulates the meaning of law institutionally. This study also emphasizes that linguistic symbols are cultural instruments that live in certain social contexts and cannot be separated from their historical background. Therefore, it is important to review the role of linguists in the courtroom so that they do not only function technically, but also have a critical awareness of the ideological dimensions of the symbols analyzed. This awareness will pave the way for a more just, participatory, and reflective practice of legal linguistics.

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