

Prof. Anter Venus' Scientific Oration: Measuring the Role of the 'Heart' in Social Interactions of Indonesian Society

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HumasUPNVJ - The dominant function of the word 'Hati' in Indonesian culture and language is more for social interaction, according to the Chancellor of the National Development University "Veteran" Jakarta Prof. Dr. Anter Venus., MAComm in his inauguration ceremony as Professor of Communication Science at the Bhinneka Tunggal Ika Auditorium UPNVJ, Friday, February 14, 2025.

The meaning of 'Heart' mentioned by Prof. Venus refers to the definition from the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), namely "something in the human body which is considered to be the place of all inner feelings and a place to store understanding."

"The heart is the center of life that accommodates aspects of feeling or emotion, spirituality, and morality," said Prof. Venus in a scientific oration before a number of invited guests from various circles.

The aspect of feeling is the most dominant factor of all expressions related to the heart. This shows that when an individual uses the heart in communicating, then he should be able to feel what others feel and be considerate.

If viewed from a spiritual aspect, continued Prof. Venus, then communication activities are related to the belief of Indonesians that every action has religious consequences.

Meanwhile, the moral aspect is related to moral considerations about whether an action is good or not good to do.

"From these three aspects, it can be simplified that our ability to manage our hearts will determine the quality of our communication. If the heart is good, then the communication will be good," said Prof. Venus.

The emphasis on the word 'Heart' in Indonesian culture is actually not special. Other Asian nations also prioritize the role of 'Heart' in their lives such as the Chinese who call the heart Xinin, the Japanese call it kokoronin, the Indians call it mana, the Arabs call it Qalb or the Thais who call it Jai.

"The difference is that the Indonesian perspective places the heart truly as the center of life. Consistently, Indonesian positions the heart as the starting point for various forms of communication," said Prof. Venus.

Reason and Mind

Although the concept of 'Heart' occupies a primary position in the lives of Indonesians, it does not mean that Indonesians do not prioritize reason and thought. Various expressions that exist actually show that the activity of thinking is very important to illuminate the heart which can be dark in certain situations. So the expression "thinking is the lamp of the heart" becomes very relevant to be used as an argument for the importance of thinking.

Apart from that, there are still many expressions that emphasize that thinking activities such as the expression "a wrong step makes the foot recede, a wrong word makes the mind think about it," or the expression "think about the income first, regret later is useless."

"What this means is that we should always make careful calculations before doing something, including before speaking or expressing ourselves in public," said Prof. Venus.

In other words, with the help of logic (mind), human communication actions will not be dominated by feelings (heart) alone. If the heart or feelings dominate completely without consideration of the mind, continued Prof. Venus, then what will happen is a disaster, as expressed in the phrase "follow the heart to die, follow the feeling to perish."

Budi as the Main Value in Indonesian Communication

If we talk about 'Heart' in the context of communication, it is closely related to 'Budi.' In KBBI, 'Budi' is defined as an inner tool which is a combination of reason and feelings to weigh good and bad.

Venus said that from this explanation it can be seen that the concept of budi accommodates the aspects of mind (reason) and feelings (as an element of the heart).

Although the concept of reason is included in the definition of budi, another explanation of budi in KBBI focuses on good deeds, goodness, morals and efforts or endeavors. This means that in the concept of budi the aspect of reason is only one element to produce good and bad actions.

Another element is the heart. If you look at the explanation of KBBI in the lemma budi, then it can be said that the budi aspect is an extension of the concept of the heart.

"Based on these reasons, it can be said that the concept of budi is derived from the concept of hati. If we refer back to KBBI, we will find the lemma or entry Berbudi in addition to being interpreted as being intelligent, but also behaving well, being wise and most importantly, a person with a good character is also interpreted as a person who is kind or generous," said Prof. Venus.

The word budi as a primary value stems from the great concept of good character (morals) which in the context of communication then becomes good language and good speech.

"Good manners are defined as polite behavior and speech, while the word good manners is equated with reason, which means speaking using reason," explained Prof. Venus.

This scientific oration emphasized that Indonesian society's communication is based on values that prioritize balance, honesty, politeness, and empathy. Prof. Venus hopes that studies on communication based on Indonesian values can find a place in the global communication science treasury.

The inauguration of the Professor was attended by various academic figures, state officials, and invited guests from various institutions. With this scientific oration, Prof. Venus not only confirmed her academic position, but also made a significant contribution to the study of communication science based on Indonesian culture.