

## LANGUAGE AND POLITICS: CONOTATIVE MEANING ANALYSIS OF “SYAIR PELEMBAGAAN NEGERI BRUNEI” FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTIC OF MUDA OMAR ALI SAIFUDDIEN

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### **Abstract**

*The creativity of a writer in a literary work mainly involves aspects of language and it is also a platform to widen its political matters. In Brunei Darussalam, Syair Perlembagaan Negeri Brunei (SPNB) (the Brunei State Constitution Syair) by Muda Omar Ali Saifuddien (MOAS) is one of the greatest literary works in the history of the 1959 Constitution. Distinctly, the language used in the couplet poems of SPNB was displayed gracefully with a meaning which the writer intended to convey. Hence, this study aims to explore the semantic aspects of interpreting the meaning of the word that implies both explicit and implicit meanings (connotative). Through literature and analysis methods, this study is also referring to an informant in order to explain the basic meaning of the word. Besides, Teori Segi Tiga Makna Semiotik Charles Sanders Peirce (1931–58) was applied in interpreting implicit meanings. The observed word was derived after identifying six prominent characteristics of leaders and political leadership of MOAS. Those characteristics were selected based on the elaboration by Nik Mustapha Nik Hassan (2013). The study found six political leadership characteristics of MOAS. The characteristics are concern for people’s welfare, prioritization of religious affairs, just and wise, emphasis on knowledge, emphasis on prosperity and security and visionary. In the meantime, at least one connotated word was applied in couplet poetry of SPNB. However, in analyzing the characteristic of a leader who prioritised the religious affairs, it was found that MOAS did not exert a word with explicit meaning. MOAS did also specify the meaning of a connotated word under the category of a just and wise leader. The analysis of the meaning of the word had reflected that MOAS had more than six characteristics that had been discussed as his legacy to stabilise the country, so that the welfare of its people will always be preserved.*

**Keywords:** MOAS, SPNB, Connotative, Leader, Leadership

### **Introduction**

Literature and politics are two things that have strong relevance. The relevance of both involves relationships between community members. As members of society, writers of literary literature create works as a medium to express creativity, ideas, and insight. The ideology of literary works produced is not only used to educate, criticize and entertain, and even become a platform for expressing things or political problems. Political disclosures have long been expressed in literary works, for example in mantras, rhymes, gurindam, saga, fairy tales and poetry.

Poetry is one of the classical Malay literature. The earliest poetry was found in the archipelago around the 16th century, which was written in Malay and also in other languages, Javanese (Ahmad 1939, 178). In the context of Brunei Darussalam (NBD), poetry writing is one of the proud works of literature. The existence of poetry in the NBD began in the 17th century and continued until the 18th century (Bakar 2005). Three famous poetry works in the NBD

community are Syair Awang Semaun, Syair Rakis and the Constitution of Brunei Constitution (Bakar 2005).

The poem of Brunei State Institution (abbreviated SPNB) was written by a royal poet who was loved by people. He was the late Sultan of Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien (abbreviated ASHOASSKW) or Muda Omar Ali Saifuddien (abbreviated as MOAS), the 28th Sultan of Brunei. Beautiful verses of the poem can describe the character of the leader and political leadership during his reign. Poetry composition also involves semantic aspects, especially in the study of meaning. A lexical or word in it allows for the expression of true meaning or implicit meaning (connotation). Therefore, this study aims to identify the leadership aspects and characteristics of ASHOASSKW which can be understood through the meanings implied in the Brunei State Institution Poetry (SPNB).

### **Leader Character and Meaning Triangle: Theoretical Framework**

In this study the thought of Nik Mustapha Nik Hassan (2013) applied as a criterion for identifying the characteristics of the political leaders and leadership of ASHOASSKW. According to him, the character of political leadership described by a leader is the first, leaders must have honesty to advance the people and nation. Second, leaders must be able to unite state resources to advance the country to the highest level. Third, leaders need to understand the situation in this country related to the strengths and weaknesses of the system, community capacity, and state resources. Fourth, state leadership needs to be managed by political leaders who are intelligent and competent because the success of building community dignity depends on leadership ability. Fifth, political leadership must be able to lead the country to play an effective role at the international level. Sixth, political leadership must have strong scientific ideas and thoughts that are in accordance with human values as a whole.

Whereas in analyzing the meaning of words in connotative functions, the Semiotic Theory of the Meaning of the Triangle introduced by Charles Sanders Peirce (Peirce 1931, 58) implemented as a guide for illumination. Semiotic is the study of signs as an analysis material and there is meaning as a form of interpretation of the questioned message. Pierce (Fiske 1990) explain that the sign can consist of symbols, icons and indices. Something referenced by a sign (representing the mind) is called an object. While interpretation is the meaning in a person's mind about an object that is referred to by a sign or concept of thinking from a person who uses a sign and decreases it to a certain meaning.

The method used in this study is the method of literature and analysis. The library method is also used to look for reference materials to better understand concepts related to the focus of the study. Researchers also visit trusted websites for references related to research.

To achieve the objectives of the study, the steps of the analysis begin by explaining the alignment of the characteristics chosen. Furthermore, the accompanying verses contain real leadership qualities. Then it will describe the basic meaning of the words contained in the selected verse verses and reveal verses that contain implicit meanings through the word that builds the verse of the verse. Meanwhile, study information (Appendix A) will be referred to to explain the basic meaning of several words. After that the meaning of the word will be interpreted according to Pierce's Semiotic Theory. The meaning of the word connotation connects the verse verse (Appendix B). Then he will interpret the implicit meanings of the two poems which at the same time will show the relationship of meaning implied by the political leadership of ASHOASSKW.

## Characteristics of MOAS Leaders in SPMB: Findings and Discussions

According to Bingham (Mar'at 1985, 10) leaders are individuals who have good personality traits and characters. Leadership is the personality of a person who has certain advantages in one field so that he can influence others, has the power and authority to direct and guide his subordinates to jointly carry out certain activities to achieve one or more goals with the support of his subordinates (Kartono 1985, 33–34).

Whereas according to Stodgill in Mar'at (1985, 38), leadership is a description of the activities of someone who is considered a leader who is positioned as the center of the environment, to provide direction for motivation, as a motivator, to provide the expected form of activity directly and clearly. Next is Fiedler in Mar'at (Mar'at 1985, 13) states leadership behavior can be defined as the actions of leaders who direct and coordinate group activities involving the formation of working relationships and consider the welfare of group members.

From the research conducted, six characteristics of MOAS political leadership were identified as leaders who were concerned with people's welfare; emphasizing religion; fair and wise; prioritizing science; prioritizing welfare and peace; and forward-thinking leaders. The six characteristics will be explained below.

### Leaders who are concerned with people's welfare

The following is explained the poems in SPNB that describe the character of leaders who are concerned with the welfare of their people:

MOAS is a leader who prioritizes people's welfare. This trait is illustrated in the verse which speaks of the opinions of the people taken into account when He commits a committee to seek the approval of the people in achieving the constitutional goals of obtaining full independence from British rule, such as the following verses:

*Perlembagaan Brunei nama ditara,  
Untuk kebajikan rakyat sugara,*

✧ *Setelah dicadangan untuk negara,  
✧ Memperbaiki nasib derita sengsara.*  
(SPNB, rangkap 16, m.s. 2)

*Komiti melawat kampung daerah  
Menerangkan maksud cadangan dicurah,*

✧ *Berjumpa ketua dan anak buah,  
✧ Semuanya setuju tiada membantah.*  
(SPNB, rangkap 18, m.s. 2)

*Semua rakyat menyambut cadangan,  
Rakyat menghadapkan segala keterangan,*

✧ *Bersuka hati mendengarkan rancangan,  
✧ Menyokong cadangan menguatkan rancangan.*  
(SPNB, rangkap 19, m.s. 2)

From the verses above, some words identified as having basic meanings are as follows:

<i>Kata</i>	Basic meaning
<i>Tara</i>	Jewelry for men is usually worn by grooms and placed on 'dastar' or songkok.
<i>Sugara</i>	Derived from two words 'fit in' which is then abbreviated as 'Sugara'. The word 'Sugara' is used to refer to places such as beaches and green areas and means beautiful places, if seen can be pleasing to the heart.
<i>Derita</i>	Difficulties borne by someone.



From the verses above, some words identified as having basic meanings are as follows:

Words	Basic Meanings
<i>Perusahaan</i>	The work is carried out in mutual cooperation
<i>Terjumlah</i>	Compact, sufficient, complete.
<i>Madah</i>	Expressions, notifications, delivered.
<i>Ijmak</i>	Agreement.

Following the meaning of the meanings mentioned above found in verse verses does not have connotative meaning and even contains words that have meaning that is meaningful. In the first line, the word 'company' supports the meaning of a work that is made in mutual cooperation. MOAS uses the word 'company' referring to the word 'difficult' in Brunei Malay language which is a diligent effort and when added to 'company' means to be transformed into business or work carried out jointly by a group of members in the community.

While the second line in verse 929, the word "number" indicates summarizing, sufficient and complete meaning. MOAS uses the word "number" to describe something that accumulates and is no less, covers and complements one another. In the third line the word "container" means expression, notification and delivery. MOAS uses the word "container" in these poems to convey the meaning of something communicated or communicated by others.

The word 'ijmak' referred to in the second line in item 930 is to support the meaning of the agreement. MOAS uses the word 'ijmak' in addition to the word agreement because he wants to clarify that the word *ijmak* is a suitable and suitable word to be used only for *ulama*.

The explanation above shows that MOAS conveyed a form of religion that was blatant, clear without involving figurative or implicit meanings. The word 'company' refers to the efforts taken by the community groups seriously, and the word 'number' is used to refer to all the contents contained in the Qur'an which are complete, accumulated and sufficient. The word 'container' is used in the third line in item syiar 929 which explains that everything that is conveyed or communicated by another person, for example, in the chapter on religious law must refer to the legitimate book of the Qur'an. While the word 'ijmak' also refers to the use of the right word used for scholars in the agreement to determine the religious law based on the Koran.

After this the evidence shows that the MOAS personality that emphasizes religion as its determination makes Islam the cornerstone of the government guided by the Qur'an and Sunnah Waljamaah experts. This statement was reinforced by an explanation by Pg Yusof Pg Rahim (1995, 7) namely the character of himself from childhood to adolescence likes to study Islam and he khatam al-Qur'an 40 times before marriage. Through the verses of the verses above, he invites his people to explore Islam as a view of life in society, especially in work. This shows that he believes Islam can bring development and progress to the country.

### ***Fair and Wise Leader***

The different character of MOAS is a fair and wise person. Showing fairness is important for the government and ensuring the effectiveness of the management of a country. Meanwhile, the leadership of the MOAS which prioritizes justice is manifested through the terms of appointment of office not to see rank but to the noble values that should be owned by the state. The four conditions needed are statesmen, generous, rich, and loyal. Requirements such as the following verse:



"Sejauh yang dapat Beta perhatikan selama ini, terdapat kementerian yang kurang serius dalam mengendalikan rancangan-rancangannya. Perkara ini Beta percaya berpunca daripada pemimpin-pemimpin yang pasif, tidak kreatif yang tidak mempunyai vision atau pandangan jauh. Mereka hanya mampu menjalankan perkara-perkara routine sahaja. Mereka kurang keyakinan pada diri, suka mencongak-congak atau mengira-ngira apa yang belum terjadi, semata-mata dengan berdasarkan prasangka-prasangka yang tidak berasas..."

(" As far as I can see, there are ministries that are less serious in handling their plans. This is what is believed by leaders who are passive, not creative, do not have vision or foresight, they are only able to carry out routine tasks, they lack confidence, like predicting what has not happened, solely based on unfounded prejudice.")

It also shows the leadership of MOAS as a careful leader in choosing his trusted people. This is because obedient leaders will not only be able to help develop the country but more importantly to protect the interests of the people.

#### Leaders who Prioritize Knowledge

MOAS is also a leader who prioritizes knowledge. Several items that have been processed have revealed the importance of having knowledge as a life guide as follows:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Wahai malaiku muda budiman,<br/>Ilmu berpandukan hadis dan firman,</p>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Tuntutlah ilmu menegakkan iman,</li> <li>✦ Ilmu tauhid mengenal Tuhan.<br/>(SPNB, rangkap 936, m.s. 82)</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Tesawuf senjata yang amat tajam,<br/>Iblis dan syaitan tak dapat merejam,</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Menjadi utap memutuskan kejam,</li> <li>✦ Ilmu yang karut dapat dipadam.<br/>(SPNB, rangkap 937, m.s. 82)</li> </ul> |
| <p>Apalagi ilmu nahu dan saraf,<br/>Segala huruf dapat diarab,</p>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Di dalam hati jika disarap,</li> <li>✦ Pegangan teguh keadaan tak larap.<br/>(SPNB, rangkap 938, m.s. 82)</li> </ul> |

The following are several words that have been identified as having the following basic meanings:

Words	Basic Meaning
<i>Senjata</i>	A tool to defend yourself from attack.
<i>Utap</i>	A kind of clothing or tool that is used as a protector.
<i>Rejam</i>	Kick, guess, bark, throw strongly.
<i>Saraf</i>	Nervous system in the human body.
<i>Sarap</i>	Absorb, insert or print
<i>Larap</i>	Action or attitude that is not good

Based on the meanings given, found in item 937, the first and second rows contain connotations. In the first line, the word 'weapon' has the basic meaning as a tool. MOAS uses the word 'weapon' to refer to the function of a weapon, which is to defend itself and that is meant in that line is defense.

In addition, the word 'utap' is also equated with the true meaning. 'Utap' which is a protective device, with its function as self defense from opponents or enemies. Therefore, the meaning interpreted is a barrier or protector. Thus, that does not mean that Sufism is a type of weapon that becomes a tool ('utap') to decide cruelly but is equated by the implicit meaning.

The implicit meaning contained in the points is the emphasis on the ability of knowledge, especially religious knowledge which is not only a guide to life but is able to protect themselves in the face of life's challenges.

The MOAS recognizes the foundation for the perfection of people's livelihoods and the key to the progress of state development is through science or education (Exhibition commemorating Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien in relation to Celebration of Brunei Darussalam National Day, 1987: 2) after Baginda's administration was not many people are highly educated. MOAS political leadership not only shows that he is a leader who has great ideas and even emphasizes the importance of science to people under his authority.

### *Leaders who are concerned with welfare and security*

MOAS always pays attention to the welfare of the country to safeguard the people's welfare. This trait is reflected in touching advice about the praiseworthy qualities that must be instilled and practiced to both enjoy the welfare and security of the country:

<i>Mengundurkan diri baik ditara, Dengki berdendam jangan dikira,</i>	✦ <i>Jangan dibuat jalan bermara, ✦ Sesama islam bersaudara. (SPNB, rangkap 117, m.s. 10)</i>
<i>Elok dimasukkan ke dalam jumlah, Aliran bahasa bangsa dikarah,</i>	✦ <i>Saudara sahabat pancir sedarah, ✦ Jangan sekali kejahatan dicurah. (SPNB, rangkap 437, m.s. 34)</i>
<i>Dari sekarang menjalankan ikhtiar, Tetapkan hati jangan berdebar,</i>	✦ <i>Bersungguh-sungguh berhati sabar, ✦ Akan mendapat nikmat diunjar. (SPNB, rangkap 558, m.s. 53)</i>

From the several verses above, some of the words that are informed are as follows:

<b>Words</b>	<b>Basic Meaning</b>
<i>Tara</i>	Jewelry for men who are usually worn by the groom who is placed on songkok.
<i>Bermara</i>	Danger or accident.
<i>Jumlah</i>	Community collection.
<i>Pancir</i>	Descent.
<i>Karah</i>	The king's duty to protect the safety of the people.
<i>Curah</i>	1. Flowing profusely like rain. 2. Come up with lots and do not break up like money. 3. Watering for example watering water. 4. Voice opinions, thoughts and feelings continuously.
<i>Unjar</i>	Search

Furthermore, the basic meaning, found in verse 437, the fourth line contains the connotation meaning through the word 'bulk'. The word 'bulk' means different from the meaning implied by MOAS. MOAS uses the word 'bulk' to refer to a rapid and understandable

deployment process that is disseminated. This is because the act of spreading can occur quickly.

While in line 117 to 15, the word 'tara' again implies a different meaning. The meaning of the word 'tara' is in accordance with the previous meaning (in section 3.1 Leaders who prioritize Science) which is interpreted as important or primary. This is because of the reference that the place of jewelry ('tara') is placed on the head which is the highest place of the human body. Based on the explanation above, the meaning contained in verse 117 is so that people under their leadership can unite by prioritizing peace regardless of racial differences.

MOAS political leadership wants its people together to be the driving force of the country's development and he calls on the people to open their eyes to upholding the integrity of the country through consensus. The wisdom of the MOAS so that the ties of brotherhood and pledges are faithful to the brilliance and fame of the NBD continue to be maintained (Rahim 1995, 8) which indirectly contributes to making the country safe and prosperous.

#### *Dynamic Leader*

ASHOASSKW is a designer of development, strategic, literary and cultural progress that holds the title "A True Genius Malay Monarch" (Nomine 2007, 13). The wisdom of the MOAS which is forward thinking can be seen when the Majesty joins sending orders to his son as guidance to His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanah Bolkuah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan from Brunei Darussalam as follows:

<i>Wahai anakanda muda handalan,</i>	✦ <i>Berjaga-jagalah mengorak jalan,</i>
<i>Di dalam percampuran majlis bualan,</i>	✦ <i>Di tempat keramaian majlis pergaulan.</i> (SPNB, rangkap 121, m.s. 10)
<i>Wahai anaknda muda ariffin,</i>	✦ <i>Cahayanya ayah muda yang mukmin,</i>
<i>Sebelum menumpukan hati diyakin,</i>	✦ <i>bukalah kitab tajul Salatin.</i> (SPNB, rangkap 461, m.s. 36)
<i>Tajul Salatin namanya buku,</i>	✦ <i>Huraian nasihat di dalamnya beku,</i>
<i>Tatkala memilih saudara suku,</i>	✦ <i>Hendaklah dibaca wahai malaiku.</i> (SPNB, rangkap 462, m.s. 36)

From the verses of the poem above, several words that have the following meanings:

<b>Words</b>	<b>Basic Meaning</b>
<i>Ariffin</i>	A wise person.
<i>Mukmin</i>	People who believe.
<i>Suku</i>	Tribe
<i>Beku</i>	1. A hard object. 2. Acts that do not move.
<i>Maliku</i>	My dear child.

Based on the basic meaning given, obtained in verse 462, the fourth line contains konotosi meaning. In the fourth line, the word 'frozen' shows the implicit meaning. MOAS uses the word 'frozen' to refer to the nature of things which when frozen will become thick and dense. With that can be interpreted is complete.

Thus, the book *Tajul Salatin* as a solid book but the implicit meaning meant by MOAS is that the contents of the book are solid and complete, not only useful as a life guide but as a

guide to Brunei's leadership as evidenced by holding Islamic ethics. The Tajul Salatin book is the scientific book of Bukhari Al Jauhari which discusses the civilization system and advisors to the Caliph or the government. The book discusses guidelines, practices and rules of the employee class (Nordin 2012). Overall, the book discusses State politics, the Islamic political perspective.

Therefore it shows the political leadership of the MOAS that Islam is a religion that will guide the country's development and that He wants His children to rule the country in accordance with Islamic politics. ASHOASSKW provides various plans for the welfare and progress of the nation and nation, and KDYMMPSBSHHBMW has realized that planning is in line with the demands and civilizations that are constantly evolving and dynamic (Nomine 2005, 3).

### **Conclusion**

Based on the research conducted, it was concluded that connotation meanings were found in several verses of the SPNB poet who discussed the characteristics of the leader and political leadership of the MOAS. At least one word is different from the basic meaning found in the first, second, third, or fourth row. In addition it also found connotating words that were repeated in another verse, namely 'utap' but still carried the same implicit meaning. However, this study only focuses on a number of verses selected and the research group believes there are more implicit meanings that can be found in SPNB if examined from a broader perspective such as analyzing pragmatically and the poet's discourse.

However, there is no connotation in the verses that discuss the leadership characteristics of the MOA as people prioritizing religion. This shows that the MOAS is very concerned with religion and wants what he conveyed through poetry verses that talk about Islam can be easily understood by readers, especially people in Brunei Darussalam (NBD). Likewise, in discussions about awarding titles, MOAS itself has provided the implicit meaning behind each of the stated characteristics. This shows the political leadership of MOAS as a leader who is very focused on religion and the leadership of state leaders in leading so that national stability is always guaranteed.

The creativity of the use of words that are based also shows the personality of the MOAS as a leader with a great spirit in achieving his ideals to fight for the fate of the nation's children so that it becomes a sovereign country. Of the six characteristics of MOAS political leadership, there are other characteristics, namely leaders who are responsible, noble, sincere, dedicated, orderly, diligent, respectful and polite. He is a pioneer and founder of modernization of NBD and the people. Your Majesty is instrumental in the development and progress of the state, especially in terms of administration, government, society, religion and education in maintaining the core of state, namely the sultanate, Malayness and Islam.

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