THE FIRST
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

I-coLLate

12 - 13 May 2015
YOGYAKARTA STATE UNIVERSITY
INDONESIA

"LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE TEACHING
FOR CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING"

Proceeding

PROCEEDINGS

The First
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I-CoLLaTe

Yogyakarta, 12-13 May 2015

"LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE TEACHING FOR CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING"

Prof. Dr. Suhardi, M.Pd.
Drs. Rohali, M.Hum.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIR

Assalamu'alaikum warrahmatullah wabarakatuh

May peace and God's blessings be upon you all

First of all allow me to extend my warmest greetings and welcome to you all to the 1st International Conference on Linguistics and Language Teaching, held by Yogyakarta State University to celebrate its 51st anniversary.

Raising the theme – Linguistics and Language Teaching for Cultural Understanding - this conference is designed to promote the use of languageas a vehicle of cultural understanding, to promote the use of Asian languages as a lingua franca in Asia, and to promote CAFR (Common Asian Framework of Reference for Language)-based learning and teaching. Hopefully, all discussions in this conference can be inspiring and useful for us to improve the quality of cultural understanding.

Ladies and gentlemen

For your information, we will proudly present one keynote speech, four plenary presentation sessions and six parallel presentation sessions. Four outstanding speakers in the field of linguistics and language teaching have been invited. They are Dr. Katharina Endriati Sukamto from The Indonesian Linguistics Community (MLI), Indonesia, Christine Moerman from Institut Français d'Indonésie (IFI), Prof. Sombat Khruathong, Ph. D. From Prince Songkla University, Thailand, Prof. David Reeve from University of New South Wales, Australia, and Nguyen Ngoc huongGiang, M.A. from Hanoi University, Vietnam.

Let me also inform you that 85 presenters from abroad and many parts of Indonesia will be discussing various important issues on linguistics and language teaching in the parallel presentations sessions. Most of them are teachers, lecturers, and undergraduate, graduate, and even postgraduate students.

Ladies and gentlemen

We have done our best to prepare for this conference. So, my highest appreciation and heartfelt thanks to all committee members. As to err is human, shortcomings may occur here and there. On behalf of the committee, I would therefore like you all to accept our apologies.

At the end of my speech,I would like to kindly request the Rector of Yogyakarta State University to officially open the conference.

To conclude, let me wish you a fruitful discussion during the conference and an enjoyable stay in Yogyakarta. Thank you very much for your attention.

Wassalamu'alaikum warrahmatullah wabarakatuh.

May peace and God's blessings be upon you all

Yogyakarta, 12 May, 2015
Conference Chair
Drs. Rohali, M.Hum.

SPEECH BY THE DEAN OF
THE FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS
YOGYAKARTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Assalamu'alaikum warohmatullahi wabarokatuh

Globalization has led changes in all aspects of human's life, including language as a means and product of culture to occur. The language and behaviors of language communities have undergone changes, shifts, mixing, or even replacement as a result of contacts of cultures and languages constituting a consequence of the globalization. It shows how big the role of globalization is in the human's life.

This brief description is actually very extreme because it can be assured that in the language communities the awareness of the importance of self identity of a language community tend to exist. This is identified by the language and the language behavior. From this point the awareness of maintaining, developing, or even preserving a language for the sake of imaging of the self identity of a language emerges– once again as a mode and product of a culture. That language shows who we are has long been believed to be true. Thus, the existence of globalization strengthens the essential position of language to show the self identity of a community (nation) in a multicultural society, a world society. In the global multicultural society's life the understanding of cross culture is getting more crucial. That is why I warmly welcome and extend my highest appreciation to the committee members of the "International Conference on Linguistics and Language Teaching" the members of the organizing committee for their hard painstaking work to bring the issues on linguistics and language teaching for the cultural understanding as the main topic of the conference and develop it into a number of sub-topics related to language, culture, and language teaching including in it curriculum and evaluation. Such issues are crucial to discuss. Sharing experiences among the conference participants will build the understanding, appreciation, and implementation of multiculturalism for realizing a peaceful life of the communities despite the heterogeneous, plural, and global condition.

To conclude, once again in this occasion let me extend my highest appreciation to the committee for organizing this conference. To all participants, I would like to say "welcome to Yogyakarta." Great thanks go to all presenters for their participation. Hopefully, this conference can bring to us benefits. Finally, let me wish you a productive discussion and a fruitful conference.

Wassalamu'alaikum warohmatullahi wabarokatuh
Yogyakarta,
Dean,

Prof. Dr. Zamzani, M.Pd.
NIP 195505051980111001

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Use of Socio-cultural Knowledge in the Meaning Making of English Texts

Margana
English Education Study Program
Faculty of Languages and Arts
State University of Yogyakarta
margana@uny.ac.id

Abstract

The study of target language (English) embodies two aspects of knowledge, namely systemic knowledge and schematic knowledge. The first aspect deals with the knowledge of the internal structure of language while the second one is concerned with the knowledge of the external structure of the language. The systemic knowledge consists of the phonological, morphological, syntactical, semantic, and pragmatic knowledge. On the other hand, the schematic knowledge embraces four issues which include the general knowledge, topic knowledge, socio-cultural knowledge, and genre knowledge. With regard to the two issues, second language learners should be familiar with both types of knowledge in order that they could acquire the target language maximally as both types of knowledge serve as the fundamental knowledge to deal with the success for English language learning. In other words, both types of knowledge become the main focus of the study of the target language. However, of the mentioned sub-types of schematic knowledge in particular, the socio-cultural knowledge is believed to be the most prominent aspect that second language learners should articulate as it provides them with an understanding of how language is employed in the communication practices in reference to social-cultural aspects of the speakers. For such a reason, this paper highlights the importance of the socio-cultural knowledge in making sense of texts.

Key words: Systemic knowledge   Schematic knowledge   Socio-cultural knowledge

Introduction

To succeed for acquiring the target language, second language learners should articulate two types of knowledge, namely the knowledge of internal structure of language and of external structure of language. The internal structure deals with the nature of language embodying the system of sounds (phonology), of words (morphology), of word arrangements (syntax), and the system of meanings (semantics). The latter is concerned with contexts that limit use of language in some communication practices. This statement is supported by Hedge in Margana (2012: 406-416) advocating two types of knowledge, namely systemic knowledge and schematic knowledge which should be accentuated in making sense of texts. The former is concerned with the knowledge about language while the latter deals with knowledge of the outside language. According to him, the systemic knowledge embodies three issues, namely phonological, morphological and syntactical knowledge while the schematic knowledge consists of four aspects, which include general knowledge, thematic knowledge, socio-cultural knowledge, and genre knowledge. In reference to the systemic knowledge, Margana (2012: 406-416) adds two other issues that second language learners cope with. They include semantic and pragmatic knowledge on the grounds that language is constructed by two aspects, namely form and meaning. Therefore, it seems to be misleading if the second language learners only rely on the form of language without understanding the meaning of it.

In relation to the systemic knowledge, it is evident that second language learners should intensively concern the sound system of language, the form of words, the structure of language, and the system of meaning both conventional and contextual meanings when they are involved in making sense of texts. Otherwise, they are likelier to find the difficulty in acquiring the target language as performed in the meaning making practices. More specifically, second language learners have to be familiar with the segmental and supra-segmental elements of language when

they are involved in spoken language. They should be able to identify types of words (content and function words) and the establishment of words involving inflectional and derivational processes. Added to this, they should have the ability how to construct above word level such phrases, clauses, and sentences with the use of existing rules underlying the arrangement of the constructions. Also, they should be familiar with the systems of meanings of the target language both convention meaning and pragmatic one.

To be successful in acquiring the target language, second language learners do not only deal with the systemic knowledge but also concern the schematic knowledge which comprises four types of knowledge, namely general knowledge, thematic knowledge, socio-cultural knowledge, and genre knowledge (Hedge in Margana, 2012: 406-416). General knowledge refers to any knowledge gained via learners' senses such as hearing, tasting, touching, seeing, and the like. With the use of the senses, they could deal with the meaning making of the world so that they could construct the understanding of the declarative knowledge to establish a particular frame on the part of the mind enabling them to make use of the knowledge when they pose any tasks related to the background knowledge. Topical knowledge means the knowledge of the use of the lexical items according to their domain or theme. This type of knowledge is constrained with the register of the lexical item. For example, the term *mouse* has different meanings which can be explored from different registers. For example, in the register of a technology, the word *mouse* is defined as a device which functions to move a cursor. In the register of politics, *mouse* means a corrupter. In the register of the biology, the word *mouse* refers to an animal. The third type of knowledge is genre knowledge. It is defined as the knowledge of the text types such as report, narrative, argumentative, descriptive, and the like. This suggests that second language learners should be able to distinguish and mark the distinctive features which characterize each type of texts. Otherwise, they would pose some problems in deconstructing or constructing the texts. The last type of schematic knowledge is the socio-cultural one which deals with the understanding of the social-cultural issues that exist in the society of the target language. It is concerned with the knowledge of social-

cultural practices that the native speakers of English have. Such knowledge serves an important role in making sense of any texts on the grounds that it is used to interpret the text by deconstructing the social-cultural issues of the texts.

In reference to the four types of knowledge, the socio-cultural knowledge as abbreviated SCK is the most prominent aspect to gain the success for learning the target language without disregarding the other types of knowledge as explored above. This relies on the fact that SCK actualizes the use of the language in the context of the situation as practiced by the speakers of English. This suggests that second language learners should be aware of the issue of social practices and culture of the target language in order to comprehensively understand how language is used in contexts. Such a statement relies on the theory that language is an individual and social possession (Wardhaugh, 2006:119) which means that language cannot be separated from the social practices of the speakers. Learning the target language without relating it to the socio-cultural issues tends to only explore the outer layer of the language. For this reason, this paper focuses the use of the socio-cultural knowledge in learning the target language, particularly in the meaning making of spoken and written texts.

Nature of Socio-cultural aspects

It is evident that the social-cultural aspects of the target language should become one of the objects of the study of the target language as language and culture are intertwined in nature. This suggests that the study of the target language has to include the study of the social practices and cultural aspects as practiced by the native speakers of the target language. In other words, the nature of the study of language should deal with the meaning making of texts which requires not only the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary but also the development of awareness of the nature of language and social contexts that initiate the use of language (Svalberg, 2007: 387-308). This statement is in line with the statements of some scholars who claim that the success of learning target language is constrained by the socio-cultural issues (Lantolf, 2000: 13-15). In other words, to be successful in learning the target language via deconstructing and constructing the English texts, second language learners have to deal with the culture of the target language.

Schuman in Ellis (1989:251-253) strongly advocates that the integration of the L2 learners into the target linguistic community is not a direct cause of second language learning but it serves as the first key factor which results in natural second language learning.

The statement above is supported by Kramsch in Lantofl (2000:133) who urges that social contexts serve an important role in language learning and acquisition since the arbitrate of the language as a system of signs or symbols is initiated by the social existence of the outside of language. This implies that the use of socio-cultural issues trigger second language learners to get clear and comprehensive experiences on social plane which enables them to store the new knowledge in long-term space rather than short-term one. Once the new knowledge is put in the long-term memory space, it can be recalled at any circumstances.

In reference to socio-cultural aspects, Kramsch in Lantofl (2000:133) states that the term socio-cultural consists of two issues, namely *social* and *cultural*. The former refers to the attribute of a society member as the language interlocutor which includes gender, education, economy, profession, religion, and the like. The latter deals with any products of human beings as the results of their thinking skills. Kramsch in Aidinlou and Kejal (2012: 139-143) defines culture as "a membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting". Webb et al. (2002:22) state that culture consists of 'institutions, rules, rituals, conventions, categories, designations, appointments and titles that constitute an objective hierarchy and which produce and accept certain discourses and activities'.

With regard to the above statements, the issue of the socio-cultural aspects embodies any aspects that exist in the social life and any elements of the culture. Both issues should be viewed as the external structures of the target language which are of great importance for the success for second language learning. This suggests that second language learners should activate the knowledge of socio-culture which is relevant to the topic of the texts discussed in classroom practices. The use of socio-cultural knowledge is prominently advocated to second language learners in order that they are able to deeply deconstruct texts to do with the meaning making.

Use of Socio-cultural knowledge in making sense of texts

As mentioned earlier, SCK is of great importance for the success for acquiring macro- and micro-language skills. This implies that SCK becomes the essential aspect of the study of the target language. In relation to this, the following issues present the application of the socio-cultural knowledge to deal with the macro-language skills which are oriented in the meaning making of the written and spoken texts as discussed below.

The National Automobile Show in New York has been one of the top auto shows in the United States since 1900. On November 3 of that year, about 8,000 people looked over the "horseless carriages." It was opening day and the first opportunity for the automobile industry to show off its wares to a large crowd; however, the black-tie audience treated the occasion more as a social affair than as a sales extravaganza. It was also on the first day of this show that William McKinley became the first U.S. president to ride in a car.

The automobile was not invented in the United States. That distinction belongs to Germany. Nikolaus Otto built the first practical internal-combustion engine there in 1876. Then, German engineer Karl Benz built what are regarded as the first modern automobiles in the mid-1880s. But the United States pioneered the merchandising of the automobile. The auto show proved to be an effective means of getting the public excited about automotive products.

By happenstance, the number of people at the first New York show equaled the entire car population of the United States at that time. In 1900, 10 million bicycles and an unknown number of horse-drawn carriages provided the prime means of personal transportation. Only about 4,000 cars were assembled in the United States in 1900, and only a quarter of those were gasoline powered. The rest ran on steam or electricity. After viewing the cars made by forty car makers, the show's audience favored electric cars because they were quiet. The risk of a boiler explosion turned people away from steamers, and the gasoline-powered cars produced smelly fumes. The Duryea Motor Wagon Company, which launched the American auto industry in1895, offered a fragrant additive designed to the smells of the naphtha that it burned. Many of the 1900 models were cumbersome—the Gasmobile, the Franklin, and the Orient, for example, steered with a tiller likea boat instead of with a steering wheel. None of them was equipped with an automatic starter. (Rogers, 2005:266)

In reference to the above text, second language learners tend to find a difficulty in making sense of it if they do not know the social-culture that underlies the text, which deals with auto-mobile issue focussing on the history of the automobile and its development. Without understanding the social-cultural knowledge of the text under the issue of automobile, they only reveal the outer layer of the text by looking at the use of lexical items as rendered to form sentences.

The following text is also exemplified the use of the SCK in making sense of a written text.

> Humans have struggled against the weeds since the beginning of agriculture. Marrying our gardens is one of the milder effects of weeds – any plants that thrive where they are unwanted, They clog waterways, destroy wildlife habitats, and impede farming. Their spread eliminates grazing areas and accounts for one-third of all crop loss. They compete for sunlight, nutrients, and water with useful plants.
>
> The global need for weed control had been answered mainly by the chemical industry. Its herbicides are effective and sometimes necessary, but some pose serious problems, particularly if misused. Toxic compounds threaten animal and public health they accumulate in food plants, groundwater, and drinking water. They also harm workers who apply them.
>
> In recent years, the chemical industry has introduced several herbicides that are most ecologically sound. Yet, new chemicals alone cannot solve the world's weed problems. Hence, scientists are exploring the innate weed-killing powers of living organisms, primarily insects and micro-organisms.
>
> The biological agents now in use are environmentally benign and are harmless to humans. They can be chosen for their ability to attack selected targets and leave crops and other plants untouched. In contrast, some of the most effective chemicals kill virtually all the plants they came in contact with, sparing only those that are naturally resistant or have been genetically modified for resistance. Furthermore, a number of biological agents can be administered only once, after which no added applications are needed. Chemicals typically must be used in several times per growing season.
>
> (Rogers, 2005:250)

With regard to the above written text, second language learners need to struggle hard to make sense of the above text because it consists of some technical terms and infrequently used words under the issue of the agricultural context which somehow distract second language learners. To figure out those difficult words, they need to activate the SCK which is lateralized in the mind of the second language learners. When they lack the socio-cultural knowledge which provides the background of the text, they tend to fail in making sense of the text.

For example, in understanding the construction of "Marrying our gardens is one of the milder effects of weeds – any plants that thrive where they are unwanted", second language learners pose a problem if they do not understand the social practice of gardening as one of the social practices of the native speakers of the target culture. On the other hand, if the second language learners are closed to a social context of gardening practices, they could elaborate the content of the text by relating their background knowledge and the text. They could explain the ways of gardening practices that they see in their environment, identify the plants for gardening, make comparison between fertile and non-fertile land, handle the weeds with the use of chemical and non-chemical substances, explain the advantages and disadvantages of herbicides, distinguish the organic and inorganic crops, list the biological agents, and the like. They do not only reveal the outer layer of the text but present the inner layer of the text by relating the background knowledge that they gain in social practices of their society in comparison with social practices of the target language society.

The knowledge of socio-cultural aspects could be also applied in making sense of the spoken texts as use of language is constrained by the context of a situation which, at least, comprises four issues, namely participants, topics, setting, and function (Holmes, 1992:12). Further, Hymes in Wardhaugh (2006:247-248) proposes the context of situation as manifested in the acronym of SPEAKING (setting & scene, participants, ends, acts and sequence, keys, instrumentalities, norm of interaction and interpretation, and genre). This suggests that second language learners should deconstruct the texts in terms of the context of the situation as the basis of the meaning making of the spoken text.

In relation to the issue, the following presents the example of the spoken text. there are two people involved in the conversation, namely Jozel and Crist. Jozel asks Crist to lend her credit card to book a cinema ticket because Jozel has no credit card.

Christ	: Hello, Jozel.
Jozel	: Hello, Crist. Could you do me a favor?
Christ	: Yeah.
Jozel	: I am going to book four cinema tickets on the phone and need a credit card member. Could you give me your credit card number? They only accept the payment by credit card over the phone.
Christ	: Ah.
Jozel	: I telephoned there and they wouldn't do any reservation....
Christ	: You mean ... without a credit? card?
Jozel	: Yes..and I could pay you back in cash.
Christ	: Yes.. sure. No problem at all.
Jozel	: Yes.
Christ	: Mm... I've got this one, which is an access card.
Jozel	: And I just tell them your number.
Christ	: You tell them my number ...this here.
Jozel	: And they tell me how much.
Christ	: That is right. That is all. That's my name there and that number.
Jozel	: Yes. I can setle it.
Christ	: Yes and bring it back when you've done.
Jozel	: Yeah ...I'll just telephone then.
Christ	: Right..okay.
Jozel	: Thanks Christ.
Christ	: Cheers.
	(Taken from McCarthy, 1991)

In reference to the above dialog, it is evident that the knowledge of the socio-cultural aspects is important for making a sense of the above text. This suggests that second language learners should have sufficient knowledge of socio-cultural issue of the credit card utilization to deeply understand the above text. Otherwise, they only reveal the outer layer of the text as performed in every sentence of the text.

To get the essence of the text, they should not only focus on the analysis of the grammar and vocabulary but also deal with the contexts of the situation of the above text in order that they could reveal the essential message of the text. In other words, they should deconstruct the text in terms of the topic of the conversation, the participants involved in the text, the setting of the text, the reasons for choosing expressions used in the text, and the other external structures. In short, to get the success for deconstructing the text, they should use the socio-cultural knowledge. Otherwise, the intended meaning of the text could not be successfully revealed.

Final Remarks

With regard to the above discussion, it is evident that the issue of the socio-cultural knowledge confers a convincing concept of the meaning making or interpretation of the texts as the use of the vocabulary and grammar does not provide second language learners with the understanding of the inner layer of the texts which they deconstruct or constructed. This suggests that English teachers or lecturers should take into account for the analysis of the social and cultural practices which constrain the use of language as the prominent knowledge of the study of the target language. In other words, the presentation of the systemic knowledge, which focuses the vocabulary and grammar, should not be the only target of the English language teaching and learning on the grounds this only facilitates second language learners to reveal the outer layer of the language which is apparently stored in a short-term memory space.

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