JAVANESE VALUES REFLECTED IN CONVERSATIONS ON THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS FOR YEAR 4 OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN INDONESIA

Meinarni Susilowati

Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora dan Budaya,, Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Malang

e-mail: <meinarni_susilowati@gmail.com>

Abstract

In this information era, where values and beliefs tend to be borderless and globalized, exposing one's identity becomes unavoidably important. Within this framework, it is important to investigate how Javanese values, which characterize Javanese identity, are used on the conversations found in the textbooks of Javanese lesson. The present paper would be of great input to find out how the existing textbook provides the sufficient space to build the community identity. To be more specific, the study investigated how the three basic values of Javanese are reflected on the conversations found on the textbook. This study uses a qualitative with a combination of discourse analysis (DA) and sociolinguistics. In addition, politeness strategies are used to determine how these three Javanese values are used in the conversations. Based on the findings of the research, there are several things to do to improve the quality of Javanese language teaching mainly, teachers need to adapt and adjust the materials in the books in order that they can suit the teaching to the students' needs. Taking into account more Javanese values which are represented in more various ways and politeness strategies can be more fruitful in cultivating the students' pragmatic awareness and their Javanese identity.

Keywords

Javanese, Primary Schools, Indonesia

Introduction

In this information era, where values and beliefs tend to be borderless and globalized, exposing one's identity becomes unavoidably important. As this age provides unlimited access to information, what happens in one part of the universe might be seen by other communities living in a very different part of the globe. Within a certain degree of intensity and a certain length of time, in a wider scope, the global village then becomes a melting pot where different values, beliefs, culture, habits and traditions influence each other and might cause a sort of unwritten agreement which creates more 'compromised' values held by these different members. Within this 'uniformity', exposing one's own unique characteristics is more and more apparent as a way of showing one's own identity.

This proves true when we mingle with people from different ethnic, cultural, religious, social and academic backgrounds. This requires us to expose our characteristics which bring along with them all values, beliefs, and experience. It seems all these 'taken for granted' attached to us because these are unconsciously inherited from parents and community through daily interactions with them. However, children today may not get such priceless inheritance, to certain extent, due to the influence of vast advanced information technology in this global era, which changes Javanese's way of life and thinking. At this stage, it is important to revitalize and preserve these values and the beliefs in a more systematic way, especially through classroom context.

However, there is a gap between what is expected and what happens in the class. Many students believe that learning English as a foreign language is more interesting than learning Javanese (Kristanto, 2006). These students further state that what they have learned from the Javanese language class does not provide a significant benefit because this class does not offer things they could apply in their daily conversations due to, among other things, lack of Javanese values in the materials they learn in the class.

Speaking Javanese is not merely using the language as it embeds its certain values that should be reflected in the selection of appropriate linguistic features and speech levels, which imply a certain degree of politeness and proximity in accordance with social class of the interlocutors. In other words, speaking the language involves the sense of being a Javanese (Berman, 1998). In fact, language represents identity. The relation between language and identity is sometimes 'so strong that even a single feature of the language suffices to identify someone's membership in a given group' (Tabouret-Keller, 1998:317).

Among the Javanese community in East Java, for example, people can be easily identified as someone coming from Malang region, only because of the vowel /a/ added to the last part of an utterance with a rising intonation. So, instead of saying 'awakmu?' *is it you?* people utter 'awakmu a?'. This sound /a/ gives a label straight away that the person belongs to Malang community who are characterized by the linguistic features. In other words, identity can be glaringly reflected in the language used by the person even through its small parts such as its phonetic system.

The relation between language and identity tends to be reciprocal. Language may represent someone's identity and, at the same time, some linguistic resources can construct her/his identity. Fought (2006) states that there are some aspects of language which construct someone's identity, such as a heritage language, code switching, specific linguistic features, suprasegmental features, discourse features, and a borrowed variety as well.

Fought (2006:21) further explains that, seen from the concept of language ideology, when someone is speaking her heritage language, s/he may commit her/himself to represent the values the language carries on. Similarly, using the language may also indicate how someone has done her effort to preserve the language, which shows 'a series of choices individuals make over the course of their lifetimes'.

Fought (2006) also highlights the importance of discourse features in exposing identity. This covers how people make use of indirectness, norms of exchange of conversations (turn-taking, silence, and backchannelling), joke, complementing, and acquisition of language norms. Another factor that may construct someone's identity is the use of 'borrowed variety' as the result of the increased intensive interethnic interaction which produces assimilation to indicate this newly formed variety.

Furthermore, Paltridge (2006) states that there is a close relation between discourse and identity as identities are recognized by participants involved in the interactions. It is further stated that the identity someone shows depends very much on the context, occasion, and purpose of the discourse. Referring to some experts' opinion, Wolfowitz (1991) elaborates more the coverage of context by considering the importance of other social features such as setting, social status, knowledge of participants, and topics.

In addition, the connection between language and identity is as 'the undeniable ties that bind localized version of reality to social interaction' (Berman, 1998:6). For Javanese, they use the language as a means of expressing how they accept their fate without resentment reflected in their daily conversations when they mingle with other members of the family or neighbors. The use of such language, which portrays their patience dealing with their hard life, earns them respect and higher social position. Within this context, these people are considered good members of society who reflect the value of 'narima ing pandum' *accept fate without resentment after some reactive efforts were done* (Purwadi, 2005).

Speaking Javanese also requires the basic notion 'urip mapan' which means *everything is harmoniously placed in a location proper to it* (Kartomihardjo, 1981). This basic notion entails the other three values which contribute to the basic notions of harmonious life, namely (1) 'tepa slira' which roughly means *being tolerant and considering other people by putting your self in their position*, (2) 'tata tentrem' which is understood as *in order and peace,* and (3) 'andhap asor' *humility* (Kartomihadjo, 1981). In a more specific way, the values are also eloquently illuminated on every aspect of their life, especially when they interact with each other in their daily life. Seen from the notion of 'urip mapan' with the three basic values, a person is supposed to select the most suitable speech level, which not only shows the respect to the interlocutor but also puts the speaker in a lower position with a certain degree of humility.

The first value 'tepa slira' helps people select utterances which prevent them to offend others by any means as they themselves do not want anyone else to hurt them. To stretch this into a wider context, the reflection of this value triggers every member of community to be sensitive to others' needs, especially in the case of being treated politely by putting self on the similar situation. The second value 'tata tentrem' *in order and peace,* requires people to keep the communication flow smooth (Purwadi, 2005). This is done by (1) selecting any utterance which reflect the speaker's good feeling to avoid any possibility of quarreling, and (2) choosing the right utterances which can best hide your anger or disappointment, however hated the interlocutors are. The third value 'andhap asor' *humility* encourages the speaker to show respect toward the counterpart, especially those having a higher position, and 'deport themselves with humility without tension arising from competition status' (Kartomihardjo, 1981:21). When this value is reflected on the daily conversation between two Javanese, it clearly shows how humble the speaker is, even when the counterpart has a lower position.

The above three values should be shown when someone speaks Javanese. Thus, it is important for the learners of Javanese to be able to understand and appropriately use certain linguistics features as well as the speech levels to reflect the three values through the selected utterances. Considering this, the ability to represent the values becomes unavoidably an important part of teaching and learning Javanese, especially in the classroom context. It is expected that teaching learning Javanese can plausibly build the community identity, as language teaching is basically the arena for a learner to negotiate 'a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in a time and it is through language a person gains access to-or denied access to-powerful social networks that give opportunity to speak' (Norton, 2000:5). It is further stated that classroom is considered more fruitful in building the identity and language competence as it can create a complex heterogeneous but systematic context for learning the language suitable for the learners' competence.

Within this framework, it is important to investigate how Javanese values, which characterize Javanese identity, are used on the conversations found in the textbooks of Javanese lesson. The present paper would be of great input to find out how the existing textbook provides the sufficient space to build the community identity. To be more specific, the study investigated how the three basic values of Javanese are reflected on the conversations found on the textbook. In addition, whether the three values are appropriately reflected on the conversations among the interlocutors is also researched.

The results will be useful for both teachers and the government in different ways. For the teachers, the findings can be practical inputs as the results of the present study indicates how the conversations as the models of real interactions which can be used to enhance the identity building. Secondly, the present study can also indicate how the appropriateness of reflecting the basic values on the conversations so that they can adopt and adapt the most suitable conversations from the available textbooks. The results can be a consideration to evaluate whether the existing textbooks have been proposing the basic values as the inseparable parts of speaking Javanese. Similarly, the findings of this study can be used to justify whether certain textbooks can be used as a recommended reference for teaching and learning Javanese.

Javanese Speech Levels

Speaking Javanese requires understanding and selecting appropriate speech levels suitable with a certain context as Javanese language is heavily values-laden by both religion and social etiquette (Koentjaraningrat, 1985). Using wrong or inappropriate speech levels may lead to serious embarrassment as the speech levels are also closely associated with the interlocutor's social class which needs a certain way of addressing. It becomes imperative, then, to determine accurately the exact status of the interlocutor to appropriately use the right speech levels.

Approaches

This present study tends to use a qualitative with a combination of discourse analysis (DA) and sociolinguistics. DA has a more flexible way of finding out the answer of the research questions as DA can provide a suitable context of the conversations to understand the implied message by considering the role of interlocutors. In other words, DA deals with 'texts and context as social practices' (Punch, 2005:222). Within this framework, I apply the concepts of Face threatening Acts (FTA) which includes the concepts of relation, power, and distance (Paltridge, 2006). In addition, politeness strategies are used to determine how these three Javanese values are used in the conversations.

I also use the principles of Sociolinguistics because the area to investigate deals with speech levels which are closely related to the social class of a community, in this case Javanese. As the speech levels are reflected on some linguistic features and are influenced by social variables, it becomes the focus of micro-sociolinguistics (Llamas, Mullany, and Stockwell, 2007). In this case, the utterances found in the conversations on the textbooks are analysed to see how the use of certain speech levels may reflect certain Javanese values which actually represent the Javanese identity.

Findings

The data are taken from four text books which are purposively selected. As Javanese is spoken at two different geographical areas, to obtain a more representative nature of the Javanese, I take two books which are designed based on the curriculum used by schools in East Java and other two books which are written based on the local curriculum used in Central Java. In general, the books are designed based on the Competency Based Curriculum 2004 which requires the implementation of the principles of Communicative Approach (CA). Thus, the focus of the books remains the same, namely developing the four skills to use the language in real communication.

Considering the variety of interlocutors and settings of the conversations, five (5) conversations were taken from the four textbooks as these points are of great importance in determining the language styles which may lead to the use of different politeness strategies and expressions of the values. The findings revealed that all utterances are written in the appropriate speech levels. The high speech level *Krama inggil* (KI), the middle level *krama madya* (KM) and low level *ngoko* (N) are used to represent the three basic values of Javanese *tepa slira* (TS) 'being tolerant', *tata tentrem* (TT) 'in order and peace' and *andhap asor* (AA) 'humility'. In addition, various politeness strategies are also employed in expressing the values.

From the obtained data, only two conversations have the context which provides situational description of the conversations. The presence of the contexts plays a significant role as it can function as the useful base to understand an 957 d interpret the whole message of conversations (Renkema, 2003; Paltridge, 2006). The availability of the contexts becomes a critical function for providing the social features as the utterances can not be used in an isolated manner and may determine the message being delivered (Wolfowitz, 1991). The contexts then become imperative in terms of developing the sociolinguistic and discourse competence.

Due to the absence of context, it seems hard to understand the whole message of Conversation 1. The only hint for the readers to understand the conversation is that the selected topic 'tsunami in Aceh' has high generality, a widely-known case, which provides an access to get the essence of the conversation (Davis, 1998). The conversation is an informal dialog between a grand mother and her grandson. This relation makes the 'superordinate' interlocutor grandmother (SIM) to use the low level N to the subordinate grandson (SIS), who speaks KI. The utterances produced by SIS can be derived from both KMand KI (Koentjaranngrat, 1985). However, theword 'mriksani' *watch* by SIS is clearly KI which can be solely used even without the help of other words from this high level. KI is utilized both to show the SIS's respect to SIM and cooperativeness to keep the conversation smooth.

Seen from the whole conversation, this power (P) seems to dictate the nature of conversation which shows a certain degree of distance (D) and relation (R), which are indicated by the responses given by the subordinate to keep the smoothness of the conversations, even though D and R are not clearly shown from the selected utterances; the absence of the supra-segmental features commonly used in oral communication such as intonation and stress may hinder to justify the interlocutors' emotional close relation which can be clearly expressed through these features.

Furthermore, on record strategies are employed to indicate the three basic values. The utterances produced by the two conversants tend to be unambiguously interpreted as the messages can be directly attained. Utterance 4 is baldly articulated because, though potentially may threat the addressee's face, but degree of FTA is small considering his lower power. Similarly, a certain utterance evidences the interlocutor's effort to signal his good feeling by elaborating the given information. A stronger emphasis as a sign of agreement to the SIM is also made as a way of exposing positive politeness. Thus, the smoothness of delivering the messages, SIS's readiness to cooperate and showing good feeling exhibit the values of TT value while the SIM' expression toward the victims of the natural disaster signifies the TS value.

The second is supported by a situational context. This part functions as the introduction of this narrative format and shows how a culturally-bound situation causes the whole conversation to make sense. In this case, the conversation shows how a student-teacher interaction is done, especially a typical Javanese way of asking for permission. It begins by displaying well-sequenced physical actions (raising hand, standing up, walking slowly, and asking for permission). These are provided actually to relate to the message, how to ask permission in class situation, to be delivered in the conversation. The unequal power generates a super-sub ordinate relation, which creates distance between the two interlocutors. As the interlocutors are socially categorized from two segregated classes, the teacher's low level N and the student's high level KI abruptly denotes this gap. However, the word *badhe* which lexically means 'will/be going to' is mistakenly used because in this context the word expresses the action being done by the speaker; the higher speech levels should only be used for showing respect to other people, not for one self. In this situation, the KM word *ajeng* is more appropriate. Otherwise, the speaker will be perceived as an arrogant Javanese because he does not reflect the value of *andhap ashor* 'which should be shown how high your position is.

The smoothness of the conversation indicates the interlocutors cooperatively talk each other. On record baldly strategy is used by both the student and the teacher as the utterances clearly show concise ways of keeping someone' face. Two short utterances produced by the teacher *iya kana* and *iya padha-*

padha glaringly indicate without redressive actions as there is no further interpretation could be possibly made except taking the lexical meanings of the utterances.

Conversation 3 contains an informal talk between friends with humorous effect. *Ngoko* is appropriately used. There is an equal power and a close relation which stimulate no distance between the two interlocutors. It is clearly showed that friendship relation seems able to eliminate different social classes, if any, between the two interlocutors.

It is interesting to note the use of a swearing word in this conversation. The word *gundulmu* is a common swearing word among close friends with a no to mild effect on someone's face. The word is used twice by different interlocutors with a similar effect on the hearer, asking for cooperativeness. Some redressive actions within on record strategy tend to be effectively used to prevent loosing face, even though the nature of friend-relationship does not provide space to happen. At the initial stage, the repeated use of 'terus?' is not an indication of FTA but a kind of strategy to cooperate and engage to the flow of the conversation. However, the repetition becomes annoying and endangers someone's face, which is then saved by a negative politeness reflected as an effective counter to the FTA.

The fifth conversation shows an interaction among family members to discuss the daughter's friend who would like to join them take a walk at the city square. The father is trying to confirm how they meet her at such a crowded place. This conversation portrays an unusual way of family interaction, where the parents intensively negotiate messages with their teen children but no utterance is produced to indicate a husband and wife interaction. As it is predicted, N-KI speech levels are used to represent parent-children relationship. The daughter is supposed to use KI as other utterances but the word 'dugi' *come* from KM is intentionally selected because the interlocutor, Sari, is talking about the third party, her friend. The use of KM effectively shows her respect to her parents and puts her friend at an equal position respectively, which as a whole indicates her AA value. In addition, the mother's way of addressing her son is necessary to discuss. She makes use of a kind of kinship address 'Mas Bayu' to the son when talking to her daughter and it can be seen as a way of respecting the position of the older sibling in a family. This respect has been given by the daughter who addresses her brother 'Mas Bayu'. However, this seniority does not sharply demarcate their position into two different continuums. Even though her brother uses N 'kowe' *you* while she makes use of KM 'Sampeyan' to address him but in it is clearly shown that the daughter does not go on using KI 'Kalawau sampun mlebet kamar kok' but switches into N 'Ayo budhal, Mas. Selak awan ki lho' when she turns talking to her brother. This nature of interaction may effectively reduce the seniority gap between the brother and the sister. In short, AA and TT values are demonstrated in this conversation, especially by the daughter.

Both on record and off record strategies are found in this conversation. Off record strategy is potentially indicated. The mother's '...Apa during rampung anggone ing jedhing?' could be interpreted to have more than one attributable intention and the readers have no sufficient clues to select the best choice. It may mean *has'n he finished taking a bath?* or *hasn't he finished having a wee?* This ambiguous implied message comes up due to the fact that, most houses in Indonesia have bathroom and toilet at the same spare room. On record strategy with a baldly without redressive action is also employed. In producing the utterance, the interlocutor is actually at the risk of making her brother loose his face but the exclamatory particle 'lho' softens her utterance and the FTA is successfully suspended. These strategies simultaneously mirror the values of AA and TT.

The available context helps the readers to obtain a kind of schemata which connects them to the conversation. A conversation between two siblings does not show that the relationship is not powerful enough to make the conversants use different speech levels. The two siblings employ an equal N in their conversations even though a certain way of addressing the older brother is used to show respectful actions. Instead of making use of KM 'Sampeyan' *you* which is appropriate and acceptable, the younger brother mentions his brother's name preceded by a compliment'Mas Johan' to show his respect. This kind of avoidance strategy can be extraordinarily used to indicate the implicit unequal power between the interlocutors as, in everyday conversation, the pronouns 'sampeyan' is more commonly selected. Similarly, this way tends to create a seniority gap between these two adult brothers as the older brother owns more power. Furthermore, a certain word from KM/KI effectively accentuates the right degree of politeness as a reflection of the younger brother' respect. The high level word 'sowanku' *my visit* manifests his deep gratitude to his older brother even though it is inappropriately used as it is not common for the superordinate, because of his higher power position, to use this expression, even for expressing humility. In fact, its inappropriateness may stimulate a negative opinion toward the interlocutor as someone who does not understand how to express the value of AA. As a whole, even

without the evidence of suprasegmental features which visibly demonstrate one's politeness, the low level N successfully presents the interlocutor's respect.

Well-sequenced utterances in this imagery conversation exhibit the cooperativeness which is proved by the smooth turn-taking between the two interlocutors and well-founded cohesiveness and coherence. A baldly without redressive action as a part of on record strategy is mostly used by the two, especially the older brother due to his superior position than the younger. In addition, from the concise utterances, the possibility of loosing face for the two is also quite small. In a nutshell, the findings of the research tend to provide the answers of the proposed research questions. It is shown that both speech levels and politeness strategies, in their different nature, represent the three Javanese values in the conversations found in the selected textbooks.

Discussion

It is interesting to find out that three out of five conversations are not provided with sufficient contexts. Even when I checked other conversations from the four books, no other conversations are equipped with this important part. Wolfowitz (1991) states that the existence of relevant context is unavoidably needed as the contexts can offer significant social features such as settings, social status and state knowledge of the participants as well as topics of the conversation. It is especially hard when the book does not provide various topic choices as the students may only access a limited range of language use because of limited settings where the language is naturally used. Schiffrin (1994:369) elaborates broadly the functions of context. In a narrative discourse, context is seen as a situation which provides 'a richly textured view of social interaction and social situation' and constitutes with the spoken language. The role of context becomes more pertinent because every utterance has its own social values, ranging from the highly vernacular to standard, through its linguistic features.

From the obtained data, it seems clear that certain speech levels provoke certain basic values in different ways, depending very much on the power, relation, and distance which may exist due to social factors. In fact, speech levels highly maintain Javanese values (Berman, 1998:24). However, to certain extent, it is not possible to judge the effectiveness of the selected speech levels in bringing the values, mostly because of the absence of linguistic features which can indicate the strength of emphasis affectuated by certain utterances produced on certain context. For example, the exclamatory particles 'lho' and 'kok' with a certain intonation creates a sense of dramatic tone as an inseparable element in the sociable effect. It is further stated that actually speaking Javanese does not directly imply 'understanding the force of its speech actions or knowing how to manage the discourse of respect and intimacy just because knowing krama and ngoko variants but someone has to learn to interact in a manner that would indicate trust and real friendship'.

In addition, on record politeness strategy tends to be more frequently used than off record strategy because the nature of the produced utterances does not require further interpretation except their literal meanings. It can be scientifically justified as the conversations are intentionally designed for children' consumption which is indicated not necessarily to have a 'full version' of adult language (Dimitracopoulou, 1990). The exclusion of utterances with off record strategy, especially the avoidance of using metaphors, tautology, etc may reduce the nature of Javanese. Seen from the authenticity of the language, less use of this strategy may impede the students' sensitiveness in catching the implied messages which are abundantly found in daily conversation in Javanese community and, as a long impact, it may decrease the effectiveness of transferring the values which may erode the identity shaping through classroom context (Norton, 2000).

In addition, it is extremely surprising to find the fact that East Java variant is not at all presented in the textbooks. There is no available proof that East Java dialect, which is different from Central Java dialect and productively spoken by most residents, is accommodated in the textbooks even in the books which are purposively designed and distributed in East Java areas. This shows that, if teachers do not design their own materials and let book do the teaching, teaching and learning process of Javanese language may not meet the students' need, in this case, to learn a language which is practically used to deliver their personal and social needs in their daily life. This may eradicate the students' interest and motivation to learn the language and may decrease the role of teaching the language as an effective way of preserving the language. In a broader sense, the ignorance of the local variant which glaringly can be found in every aspect of daily life may uproot the original nature of East Java ways in expressing the three basic Javanese values. As the long term effect, these two factors may abruptly eliminate any effort to cultivate Javanese identity.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the research, there are several things to do to improve the quality of Javanese language teaching. First of all, teachers need to adapt and adjust the materials in the books in order that they can suit the teaching to the students' needs. Taking into account more Javanese values which are represented in more various ways and politeness strategies can be more fruitful in cultivating the students' pragmatic awareness and their Javanese identity. Secondly, more people who have conducted researches in this area or the experts of this discipline should be more actively involved in the process of teaching Javanese, at any stage. Thirdly, workshop and training on shaping and developing the students' identity by indirectly including the Javanese values on their teaching. In my area, Malang region, this can be done by building long term and sustained collaborations between school and university. This can engage some university language teachers who have relevant expertise in these projects so they could propose some practical research based alternatives.

This present study is only dealt with a small aspect of Javanese language teaching with some crystal clear limitations. First, it only analyzes 5 data randomly selected from four books purposively chosen. More data taken from more books may yield different results. Secondly, no data are collected from the writers concerning the process of the material selection and development done by the writers of the books. Some practical and economical considerations may prevent them to express their best. Third, no observation and interview are conducted to obtain the information on how actually the teachers make use of the book. Some teachers might put it as an alternative, some take certain relevant parts of the books while some others take the books to do some teaching. This may lead to different outputs of the teaching learning processes.

To provide a more rounded picture, it is important to conduct research in the following areas. It is plausibly important to conduct a cross sectional or longitudinal research to obtain the empirical data on how Javanese language teaching influence the students' ways of representing the Javanese values in their daily use of the language. In coping with the three above limitations of the research, it is also important to uncover the students' perspective on the ideal Javanese class. Similarly, obtaining scientific evidence on how the students internalize the taught Javanese values and represent these in real life is also worth doing. Think aloud procedure may come up with the needed data.☑

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