LANGUAGE USE AS A PART OF CHARACTER VALUES

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ABSTRACT

As the social men people interact each other whether in family life and society life through communication, both verbal and non-verbal communication. To communicate, people use language to convey their feeling, thought, and intention. The used language can be formal or informal. Because of that, communication ability is very important since the used language to communicate shows the character of language user.

Sebagai makhluk sosial manusia berinteraksi dengan sesamanya baik di lingkungan keluarga maupun di lingkungan masyarakat melalui komunikasi, baik komunikasi verbal dan non-verbal. Untuk berkomunikasi manusia menggunakan bahasa untuk menyampaikan maksud mereka. Bahasa yang digunakan pun bisa bersifat resmi dan tidak resmi. Oleh sebab itu kemampuan berkomunikasi sangatlah penting karena bahasa yang digunakan untuk berkomunikasi menunjukkan karakter pengguna bahasa tersebut.

Kata-kata Kunci: bahasa, kemampuan berkomunikasi, karakter,

A. INTRODUCTION

Law number 20 year 2003 section 3 about education system states that national education aims to improve ability and to form character and nation civilization which has dignity for developing intelligence or mental capabilities of nation life. National education aims to improve students’ potential in order they can be a faithful people, to have a certain character, healthy, capable, creative, autonomous, and to have insight and knowledge.¹

Based on the aims of national education, it is clear that students hoped to be able to have: (1) social competence-involves a range of interpersonal skills that help youth integrate feelings, thinking, and actions in order to achieve specific social and interpersonal goals. These skills include encoding relevant social cues; accurately interpreting those social cues; generating effective solutions to interpersonal problems; realistically anticipating consequences and potential obstacles to one’s actions; and translating social decisions into

¹ Depdiknas, 2003, Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, Jakarta: Depdiknas.
effective behavior; (2) emotional competence—the ability to identify and respond to feelings and emotional reactions in oneself and other; (3) cognitive competence—the ability to develop and apply the cognitive skills of “self-talk…the reading and interpretation of social cues…using steps for problem-solving and decision making…understanding the perspective of others…understanding behavioral norms…a positive attitude toward life, and self awareness.” The second aspect of cognitive competence is related to academic and intellectual achievement. The emphasis here is on the development of core capacities, including the ability to use logic, analytic thinking, and abstract reasoning; (4) behavioral competence—refers to effective action. The W.T. Grant Consortium identified three dimensions of behavioral competence: Nonverbal communication (“through eye contact, facial expressiveness, tone of voice, gestures, style of dress”), verbal communication (“making clear requests, responding effectively to criticism…expressing feelings clearly”), and taking action (“walking away situations involving negative influences, helping others, participating in positive activities”); (5) moral competence—a youth’s ability to assess and respond to the ethical, affective, or social justice dimensions of a situation. Piaget (1952, 1965) described moral maturity as both a respect for rules and a sense of social justice.\(^2\)

The essence of social competence is able to communicate in oral, written, gestured/body communication politely. It can be separated from interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication can be face-to-face communication or mediated communication. As we know that the used language not only pay attention to the grammatical rules, but also the norms of appropriateness or communication ethics. Sometimes we hear or even experience in face-to-face communication or mediated communication in which a communicator or a receiver used unappropriate sentences. Even it is a very common thing that in politic campaign we heard that the communicator of campaign said rude sentences towards the others.

Sentences can be said unappropriate because the communicator or the receiver not paid attention diction, status social, or formality of communication. That is why in communication, a communicator or a receiver should has communicative competence—the ability to use language in a social context, to observe sociolinguistic norms of appropriateness.\(^3\) In the following are two


examples of communication (mediated communication and face-to-face communication) which is not pay attention the norms of appropriateness.

The first communication is between a lecturer and an undergraduate student. The lecturer is his skripsi adviser. The student send a message to his lecturer.

_Ibu sudah di kampus?_
_Ya, saya di kampus sekarang._
_Ibu tunggu sadiki wa. Saya dalam perjalanan sekarang._

_Ma’am, are you in campus?_  
_Yes, I’m in the campus now._  
_Ma’am wait for me a few minutes yeah. I’m on the way now._

The second communication also between a lecturer and an undergraduate student. The lecturer is his skripsi adviser. They were in lecturers’ room. The lecturer was guiding him related to his skripsi writing.

_Ibu, bagaimana dengan skripsi saya, bu?_  
_Saya sudah membacanya sebagian dan ada hal-hal yang harus diperbaiki (Dosen memberitahukan apa-apa yang harus diperbaiki oleh mahasiswa nya) _  
_Oh, ya bu. Nanti saya perbaiki._  
_(Sebelum meninggalkan ruangan, mahasiswa berkata: “Ibu, saran saya sebaiknya dipercepat saja pembimbingannya supaya saya bisa ikut ujian tahun ini”)_

_Ma’am, how about my skripsi?_  
_I have read a part of it, and there are some things that you have to improve in your skripsi (lecturer told him what he must improve related with his skripsi) _  
_Oh, yes ma’am. I will improve it._  
_(Before leaving the room, the student told: “Ma’am, I suggested you it was better the guiding is done as soon in order I could follow the examination this year”)_

The sentence “_Ma’am wait for me a few minutes yeah. I’m on the way now_” shown us that the student did not pay attention the components of communicative competence that is sociolinguistic competence-the knowledge of the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants, purposes of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction.\(^4\) Also, in the sentence “_Ma’am, I suggested you it was better the guiding is done as soon in order I could follow the examination this year_”

\(^4\) Canale in B. Kumaravadivelu, _ibid_, p. 17
shown us that the student insisted the lecturer to guide him in his skripsi writing.

In regards to the facts above, it can be seen that the two students do not have a good character, which is refers to attitudes, behaviors, motivation, and skills.\(^5\) In the first communication the student asked the lecturer to wait for him. He supposed that he spoke with his friend. In the second communication, the student insisted the lecturer to guide him in accordance with his time, whereas one of the national education aims the students have a certain character. Relating to language and character, this literature review purposes to describe: (1) language and communicative competence, involves: a) theoretical concepts of language, b) communicative competence, and c) communication ethics; (2) character and character education, involves a) what is character and character education?, and b) character values.

B. LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

1. Theoretical Concepts of Language

Every aspects of life use language as a tool to communicate. In short, language is used to easier human relation with other. We can not imagine the world without language. Language means any set or system of linguistic symbols as used in a more less uniform fashion by a number of people who are thus enabled to communicate intelligibly without one another.\(^6\)

Robert M. Krauss described language as a code that uses words, phrases and sentences to convey meaning. A code is a system that maps a set of signals onto a set of significates or meanings, and in the simplest kinds of code, the mapping is one-to-one: for every signal there is one and only one meaning; for every meaning, there is one and only one signal.\(^7\) Meanwhile, Harley defines language as a system of symbols and rules that enables us to communicate.\(^8\)

2. Communicative Competence

As has been stated above that character refers to attitudes, behaviors, motivation, and skills. The skills I mean here is communicative competence. Communicative competence is the competence which enables us to transmit and

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\(^8\) Martyn long, *The Psychology of Education*, (New York: Taylor and Francis Group, 2003), p. 188.
interpret messages and given meanings in the interaction between individuals in a specific context.9

Habermas (in Munby, 1994: 11) said that communicative competence relates to an ideal speech situation in the same way that linguistic competence relates to the abstract systems of linguistic rules. Communicative competence is defined by the ideal speaker’s mastery of the dialogue – constitutive universals irrespective of the actual restrictions under empirical conditions.10

Meanwhile, in the United States, Hymes (1971) had reacted to Chomsky’s characterization of the linguistic competence of the ideal native speaker and, retaining Chomsky’s distinction between competence and performance, proposed the term “communicative competence” to represent the ability to use language in a social context, to observe sociolinguistic norms of appropriateness.11

Communicative competence is a subconscious knowledge of language use, and of language as discourse. Communicative competence involves not just language competence (grammar, vocabulary, etc.), but also a knowledge of how language is used appropriately and how language is organised as discourse. A knowledge of language use is the knowledge of how to use language appropriately-how to get it to do, what we want it to do in the right circumstances. What governs appropriacy? What factors can affect how we choose what words we use? The answers of these questions are: (1) setting-where are we when we use language? What situation are we in?; (2) participants-who is taking part in the language exchange?; (3) purpose-what is the purpose of the speaker or writer? Is it to invite or to complain? To apologise or disagree? To explain or to demand?; (4) channel-is the communication face to face? Does it take place over the telephone? Is it contained in a letter of a fax or a novel?; and (5) topic-what are the words about? A wedding or particle physics? Childbirth or the latest film?

All these factors influence language users in their choice of words. Of course the choice of language will depend crucially on what your purpose is. Another kind of knowledge is the skill of structuring discourse which refers to

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10 John Munby, Communicative Syllabus Design: A Sociolinguistic Model for Defining the Content of Purpose-Specific Language Programmes, (Britain: Athenaeum Press Ltd., 1994), p. 11
how to string what we will say, how to organise the points we wish to make, and what we will say first.\(^\text{12}\)

Canale in Huda stated that communicative competence involve of four domains of knowledge and skills, namely: (1) grammatical competence, which is identical with linguistic competence. It involves the mastery of language codes both verbal and non-verbal, such as vocabulary, derivations, sentence formation, pronunciation, spelling, and semantics. This competence is required for the understanding and expressing literal meaning of an utterance; (2) sociolinguistic competence, which is deals with socio-cultural and discourse rules. Sociolinguistic competence relates to the extent an utterance is expressed and understood correctly in different sociolinguistic contexts, which in turn depend on certain factors such as speaker-listener status, the objective of the interaction, and the rules and norms of the interaction. The appropriateness involves form as well as meaning; (3) discourse competence, which is concerned with the mastery of ways to combine grammatical forms and meaning to produce either a spoken or written utterance wholly in various forms. Unity of an utterance can be attained through form cohesion and meaning coherence; (4) strategic competence, which is consists of the mastery of both verbal and non-verbal communication strategies used by a speaker to (a) make up for the weakness in communication due to the limitations of circumstances, and (b) to strengthen the effectiveness of communication.\(^\text{13}\)

Refers to the definitions and the kinds of communicative competence, so, communicative competence is a competence that belongs to someone, in which she/he must comprehend how a language is used appropriately in every speech situation in which she/he must pay attention the rules of language, the formality of speech and status of communicators and/or communican.

3. Communication Ethics

A good communication has to pay attention the ethics. That is why both of the communicator and communican need to know some things of communication process\(^\text{14}\), namely: (1) the values and norms of local socio-cultural; (2) rules and regulation that have been agreed; (3) politeness norms in all aspects of life; (4) morality norms and characters; and (5) good social intercourse etiquette.


Meanwhile, Thomas Nilsen in Kismiyati El Karimah and Uud Wahyudin said that in order to achieve polite interposonal communication, it is needed some attitudes\textsuperscript{15}, namely (1) respect someone as a person without seeing age, status, or relation with the speaker, (2) respect idea, feeling, intension, and integrity of others, (3) Objectivity, open-minded which encourage expression freedom, (4) respect to proof and rational decision toward various alternatives, and (5) listen carefully at first, sympathetic before states agreeing or disagreeing.

In regards to communication process of Suranto Aw, I emphasize my view on politeness norms in all aspects of life. Based on this statement, it can be seen that politeness norms must be applied in family, social life include in society, schools and colleges, and field of endeavor. The politeness norms include attitudes, how we behave and act, and how we speech.

In regards to attitudes to achieve polite interposonal communication of Thomas Nilsen, I emphasize my view on respect someone as a person without seeing age, status, or relation with the speaker. It means that in communication process we have to treat everyone in polite manner. We have to use good and polite language. More polite we treat someone more high impression we get.

C. CHARACTER AND CHARACTER EDUCATION

1. What is Character and Character Education?

A nation will be a developed and autonomous country if supported by human resources who have good moral. The reality shown that a nation which has human resources with high cognitive does not mean that the nation can be a develop country. It is becaused the cognitive ability of the human resource are not supported by moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action\textsuperscript{16} which are involves in components of good character.

According to Novan Ardy Wijayani, character is special characteristic belongs to someone or something. The special characteristic is origin and root to individual’s personality or thing. It is a ‘machine’ which is drive how someone act, have a certain attitude, speak, and response something.\textsuperscript{17}

Meanwhile, Michael Novak, a contemopper philosophical, said that character is the harmony blend of all morals in religion, literature stories, wise men stories, and learned men, since old era till nowadays. Nobody has all morals. Everybody has weakness. People who has great character can be very

\textsuperscript{15} Kismiyati El Karimah and Uud Wahyudin, \textit{Filsafat dan Etika Komunikasi}, (Bandung: Widya Padjajaran, 2010), p. 79


\textsuperscript{17} Novan Ardy Wijayani, \textit{Membumikan Pendidikan Karakter di SD}, (Jogjakarta: Ar-Ruz Media, 2013), p.24-25
different between one and another.\textsuperscript{18} D. Yahya Khan defined character is a stable person attitude. It is a consolidation process progressively and dynamics, or the integration of statement and action.\textsuperscript{19}

Muchlas Samani and Hariyanto means character as basic value which is developed someone’s personality. Its form from both heredity and environment which is differentiate someone to another, and implemented in his/her behavior and attitude in daily life.\textsuperscript{20} Character is defined in terms of both moral and ethical qualities and their “demonstration in emotional responses, reasoning, and behavior” (Institute of Education Sciences, 2006).\textsuperscript{21}

Personality is the expression of a man’s “inner” life; while character is the expression of what he does or achieves. In describing degrees of personality we are apt to employ such words as “richness” and “fullness,” whereas character is described in terms of “will-power” and “persistence.”\textsuperscript{22}

According to Nur Aisyah Buang in Dindin Jamaludin, in general character symbolizes someone’s personality. Characters are certain traits that have been in a person which are shown in the form of his behavior. This combined various characters that are giving this individual perspective which translates principle of his life in the way he acts on whatsoever in his surroundings. Characters should not refer to a person's moral character and ethics but includes aspects of intellectual character, emotional character, physical character, spiritual character and the end of all social character (JESIS). All of these characters should be integrated with each other as a SYSTEM in the formation of one’s balance personal. There are seven (7) principles to define the character:

1. Characters include all the characteristics or qualities of a person.
2. Character is one trait (habit) how to think, talk and behave. The positive attributes include enthusiastic, on time, and trustworthy should be reliable.
3. Positive character may be built (as well as a negative character can be disposed) with the continuous earnestness.

\textsuperscript{18} Michael Novak in Thomas Lickona, \textit{Pendidikan Karakter: Panduan Lengkap Mendidik Siswa Menjadi Pintar dan Baik}, Translated by Lita S., (Bandung: Nusa Media, 2013), p.72
\textsuperscript{20} Muclas Samani and Hariyanto, \textit{Konsep dan Model Pendidikan Karakter}, (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2013), p. 43.
\textsuperscript{21} Richard F. Catalano, J. David Hawkins, and John W. Toumbourou, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 469
\textsuperscript{22} Robert Morris Ogden, \textit{Psychology and Education}, (UK: Routledge, 2005), p. 57
4. Every human being is responsible on his own decision. By that, character can be changed if someone take a decision to change its character despite his neighborhood element has influence his character.

5. Character may be established but requires the individual's motivation to push it. For example, a student will not cheat during exams because of fear of being caught by the guards (external motivation) or merely want to show a self respect (internal motivation).

6. Each man’s character had been formed during the growing process from childhood to adulthood. By then, he should be allowed to judge his character whether positive or negative characteristics. By then, this man shall sit in neighborhood which continues to remind and encourage positive character.

7. Every man should have a positive character. He just needs to strive towards it.

Related to the definitions of character above, so, character is basic values belongs to someone which is shown how she/he think, behave, act, and speak. In short, character related to cognitive intelligence, social intelligence, and spritual intelligence. Character is not only heridited but also it is achieved from education, both in formal and non-formal education. That is why education institutions apply character education from elementary schools up to colleges. It means that character education has a great role for human life.

In order to assist in improving character education programs, Lickona in Jovan Kristo expanded and redefined the “Six Pillars of Character” into what he referred to as the ten essential virtues.

The first virtue is wisdom. This is the ability to make logical decisions that are good for both ourselves and others. It allows us to know when to act, how to act, and how to balance different virtues when they do not agree.

The second virtue is justice, which means to respect the rights of other people. In schools, this can easily be described with an emphasis on The Golden Rule, treat others the way you want to be treated. The third virtue is fortitude, which is the ability to do the right thing when that is not the easiest thing to do. Having fortitude could make all the difference for the teen agers who turn to suicide when they do not know how else to deal with their overwhelming emotions. The fourth virtue is self-control which is the ability to handle ourselves and not give into overbearing feelings or temptations.

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23 Dindin Jamaludin, Character Education in Islamic Perspective, International Journal Of Scientific and Technology Research, Volume 2 ISSUE 2, 2013, p. 188

The fifth virtue is love, which in this context refers to the willingness to sacrifice for the good of others. This can be seen in many forms such as empathy, compassion, kindness, generosity, service, loyalty, patriotism, and forgiveness. The sixth virtue is having a positive attitude. Having a negative attitude is a burden on the people around you and roadblock for yourself. If someone has a positive attitude then they are increasing their chance of success and are more valuable to others. Plain old hard work is the seventh virtue. When it comes down to it, anyone who has ever accomplished anything major in their life had to have put forth at least some hard work to get there. Hard work can be seen through taking initiative, being diligent, setting goals, and being resourceful.

The eighth essential virtue is integrity which is how people act when no one is looking. It involves following moral principles, being truthful, and standing up for what you believe. Gratitude is the ninth virtue and it entails being thankful for what you already have. In today’s world it is very easy to be envious of the possessions and privileges that those around us possess. Having gratitude is the ability to look past that, and be happy with everything that you are blessed to have in your life. The tenth and final virtue is humility which gives us the ability to see our own imperfections and strive to become better than ourselves. These ten essential virtues represent what character education stands for and what it was established to pass on to its students.

Burrett and Rusnak in Jovan Kristo also made an effort to improve the implementation of character education programs by proposing six key principles as a guide. The first principle is that character education should be a part of every subject, not just another separate class that is taught. Teachers are encouraged to find ways to implement character education topics right into their daily lesson plans. The second key principle is that the school and community are vital partners in the character development of youth. This can be done by encouraging parents to be involved with their children’s school by being part of the PTA (parent-teacher association) board, volunteering to chaperone field trips, and keeping them aware of what is going on in the life of their child at school. Also, it is important for schools to encourage community involvement by doing things such as inviting community members to support school causes and to come speak to classes about community organizations or jobs.

The third principle of a strong, integrated program is to provide a positive classroom environment that supports character education. The fourth principle states that empowered teachers are in the best position to achieve character goals. It is imperative that schools have teachers who have a good attitude and are committed to implementing a character education curriculum.

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Character education being encouraged through administrative policy and practice is the fifth key principle in implementing character education in schools. It is important that, as the leader of the school, the administrator standup and not only support the implementation of character curriculums, but also be a role model in enacting the virtues that character education stands for. The last key principle is that character education is action education. This means that curriculums should involve students in discussion, reflection, and action of worthy values and morals.

Refers to the statements of character education above, I can said that character education is a teaching process. In this process, teachers not only teach character values, but also they apply the character values in school and daily life so that they become leaders for students and students can imitate the positive things. In order teachers can improve their insight about character, it can be improved by such as reading related books, being active in organizations, and following symposium.

2. Character Values

In the society life, we can not be apart from values. Lickona divided values into moral and non-moral. Moral values contain obligation, such as honesty, responsibility, and justice. Moral values tell us what we must do. We must be in accordance with the values eventhought we do not want to do it. Non-moral value does not contain obligation. Non-moral value shown us what we want to do.26

Based on the study of religion values, social values, rule/law, academic ethics, and humans’ basic right, it has been identified values items which is consists of five basic values, namely: (1) character values relate with the God, (2) character values relate to ourselves, (3) character values relate with others, (4) character values relate with environment, and (5) nationality values. For more clearly about these five values, they will be described27 as follow.

a. Character values relate with the God-Religious: mind, speech, and act of someone always based on divinity values or his/her religion education.

b. Character values relate to ourselves, involves: (1) honest-behavior which is based on effort to make himself/herself as a person who can be trusted in speech, act, and work, both for ourselves and others; (2) responsible-attitude and behavior of someone for doing task and obligation as she/he must do for himself/herself, society, environment (nature, social, and culture), country, and God; (3) health-life stylish-the all effort to apply good habitual for health-life and avoid bad habitual which can distract the

26 Thomas Lickona, op.cit., p. 55.
healthy; (4) discipline-the action which is shown an obedient and order behavior in various rules; (5) work hard-behavior which is shown an effort to overcome various obstacles in finishing task, or work well; (6) self-confidence-believe in himself/herself that he/she can achieve his/her desires and hopes; (7) entrepreneurship-autonomous and intelligent attitude and behavior or talented to know new product, determine the way of how to make new product, organize operation for supplying new product, market it, and organize the modal of operation; (8) think logic, critic, creative, and innovative-think and do something based on the reality or logical to produce new way and result and the latest from what he/she has had; (9) autonomous-attitude and behavior which is independent in finishing tasks; and (10) curious-attitude and behavior which always effort to know deeper and wider from what she/he has learned, seen, and heard.

c. Character values relate with others, involves: (1) realize self and others’s right and obligation-know and understand, and do the right and obligation of self and others; (2) obey the social rules-obey the rules related to society and public interest; (3) appreciate works and achievement of others-attitude and action which encourage self to produce useful things for society, admit and appreciate someone’s successful; (4) well mannered-refined both from the point of view of grammar and behaviors for all people; and (5) democratic-the way of thinking, acting, and attitude which is value the similarity of right and obligation of self and others.

d. Character values relate with environment-care with social and environment: attitude and behavior which always effort to avoid the damage of environment and improve the effort to repair the damage of nature, and always gives help for others and society who need helps.

e. Nationality values—the way of thinking, acting, and insight which emphasize the nation than emphasize self and group, involves: (1) nationalist-the way of thinking and acting shown loyalty, caring, and high appreciation to the language, environment, social, culture, economy, and nation politic; (2) appreciate diversity-attitude of giving respect to various aspects, involve physic, chararacteristic, custom, culture, etnics, and religions.

D. CONCLUSION

As social creatures we use language to easier our relationship with the others. That is why the language use must pay attention politeness norms. It means that in communication process we have to treat everyone in polite manner. We have to use good and polite language. More polite we treat someone more high impression we get.

The language use is not merely know the grammar of the language. It is also related to communicative competence-that is language is used appropriately in every speech situation in which she/he must pay attention the
rules of language, the formality of speech and status of communicators and/or communican. In short, we must comprehend the four aspects of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence.

Language use also include in one of the character values, namely character values relate with others, that is well mannered-refined both from the point of view of grammar and behaviors for all people. So, it is clear that good and polite language is not merely related to communicative competence, but it is also become the aspect that is emphasized on character values. As the aims of character education, so, character values must be applied in daily life, include language politeness.

REFERENCES


