

Social actors in an Intercultural Communication classroom: A discursive lens of intercultural education

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Abstract

This study focused on how teachers and students as the social actors in an Intercultural Communication (IC) classroom were represented discursively. A video recording transcript of IC classroom activities at a state University in Indonesia was selected as the data source. The data source was rigorously analysed through van Leeuwen's Socio-semantic inventory of social actors framework (Van Leeuwen, 1996). The main findings show that social actors in IC classroom can be categorised into two main thematic representations, namely positive and negative ones. disclosed that Hamzah as the representative of classroom presenters was represented as victimised, oppressed, intimidated and minoritised actor. Hamzah's Mathematics teacher was depicted as an intolerant, dehumanising, discriminatory and oppressing actor. Hamzah's Social Sciences teacher was illustrated as a racial, stereotyping, dominant and provoking actor. The Intercultural Communication teacher was delineated as the actor endeavoring to encourage his students to be tolerant, critical, supportive and open-minded people. Hamzah's classmates in IC classroom were characterised as sympathetic, supportive, friendly and reactionary actors.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication, social actors, discursive representation, othering

Introduction

In the last few decades, Intercultural Communication (hereafter, IC) has shown a rapid development and gained burgeoning attention among scholars (Byram, 2008; Jackson, 2012; Martin, et. al., 2012; Jin, 2015; Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018). Even, it has been accepted in more various, multidisciplinary (i.e. anthropology, applied linguistics, communication studies, education, language, psychology and sociology) and worldwide scopes (Jackson, 2012: 1). One of the crucial factors accelerating

such a salient development is the interdependence and interconnectedness significantly enlarging in this current age (Portera, 2014). As a result, deploying effective communication strategies among people possessing sundry linguistic and cultural ambience has become a thought-provoking issue (Ciprianová & Vančo, 2010; Baker, 2011, 2012). Another factor is language and culture are interwoven each other (Kramsh, 1998). This notion generates a substantial paradigmatic shift from the linguistic competence to intercultural communicative competence (henceforth, ICC). ICC refers to “the ability to communicate and interact across cultural boundaries” (Byram, 1997, p. 7). In other words, ICC enables people to attain successful communication despite they have dissimilar cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Baker, 2012).

In relation to the current English language education, ICC is regarded as one of the pivotal English language teaching goals at the entire levels of education (e.g. primary, secondary and tertiary levels) (Kiss & Weninger, 2017; Liu & Fang, 2017). This correlates to the role of English as the global language for it governs the entire domains of global communication, such as education, business, and technology (East, 2008). Likewise, Kachru (2006) argued that English has appeared as the *lingua franca* (ELF) of the world due to its amounts of non-native speakers although it has been criticized for its negative hegemony, namely linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 2012). Therefore, the monolithic movements of equipping the students with ICC in English language teaching have developed progressively in around the world, notably in the non-English speaking countries, such as China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan (Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018). Hence, seeing the importance of learning English in the dimensions of language and culture, the teachers should incorporate cultural elements to ELT curriculum, teaching materials and pedagogical tasks (Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018).

One of the tertiary education levels pioneering to incorporate Intercultural Communication course in their curriculum system is an English Education Department (henceforth, EED) of a state university in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. Chronologically, Intercultural Communication course is designed as a response to the significance of acquiring ICC and intercultural awareness as one of the paramount goals of English language teaching in such an institution. To illustrate, the course aims at enabling the students to (1) explore cultural self-awareness, other cultural awareness, and cultural dynamics arising in interaction between two cultures or more (2) understand how communication processes differ among cultures, (3) identify challenges appearing from these distinctions in intercultural interaction and learn ways to creatively address them, (4) locate the indispensable roles of context and power in studying intercultural

communication, (5) acquire proceduralized knowledge, skills and attitudes increasing intercultural competence, (6) foster an ethical framework and practical competences for engaging the students in communication across individual differences, notably across nations, cultures, languages, ethnicity and other diverse backgrounds and (7) build and demonstrate cultural awareness to construct understanding of existing individual differences for the sake of minimizing intercultural miscommunication (Abdullah, 2017). Basically, the course aims at preparing the students to communicate interculturally and contextually and reducing the possibilities of intercultural misunderstanding. Overall, it provides them theoretical, methodological, and practical insights into intercultural communication (Abdullah, 2017).

Regardless of numerous preceding studies on intercultural communication (Liu & Fang, 2017), ICC (Byram, 1997; Mirzaei & Forouzandeh, 2013) culture in foreign language teaching (Kramsch, 2013), intercultural awareness (Baker, 2011), intercultural ethics (Phipps, 2013) and intercultural learning (Benson, 2015), have mushroomed in recent years, nothing so far seems to focus on examining intercultural communication through a discursive lens (see Lawless, 2014; Awayed-Bishara, 2017; Andriani & Abdullah, 2017).

Even though such empirical investigations accentuated on the employment of discourse-analytical tools to unveil the power, ideology, and domination hidden behind the cultural-based texts and classroom-based activities transcript, the present study endeavored to explore how the teachers and the students as the social actors in an Intercultural Communication classroom were represented discursively. Moreover, the remaining sections of this article will sketch literature review, research methodology, findings and discussion and conclusion. Also, the limitations of the study and further directions of future research will be presented.

Theoretical Framework

Conceptualising Intercultural Communicative Competence and its contribution

Recently, communication and interaction through English embrace people with assorted languages and cultures so that comprehending cultural contexts and communicative activities to effectively communicate remains pivotal (Baker, 2012). For this reason, possessing deep-rooted ICC to communicate globally has become an inevitable need. To do so, both speakers and hearers should own indispensable attributes of ICC, such as “tolerance of ambiguity, cognitive and behavioural flexibility, personal self-awareness, cultural self-awareness, patience, enthusiasm and commitment,

interpersonal sensitivity, understanding of difference, openness to new experiences and people, empathy, a sense of humility and a sense of humour” (Paige, 1986, as cited in Weinstein & Obear, 1992, p. 49). Moreover, constructing a positive attitude, valuing cultural diversity and being thoughtful of such a diversity are demanded to invigorate the attributes of ICC (Huang & Kou, 2012). Pedagogically speaking, by internalising and applying those attributes of ICC in the foreign language learning empower the students to be intercultural communicators who have multiple perspectives to view the world and are able to negotiate in varied cultural landscapes (Byram, et. al., 2002).

Critical Discourse Analysis

Theoretically, Critical Discourse Analysis (hereafter, CDA) refers to an investigative approach deployed in multidisciplinary studies and viewed as multi methodical approaches (Huckin, 2001; Fairclough, 2001; van Dijk, 2001; Wodak, 2001). CDA stems from critical linguistics and critical theory (Bloommaert, 2005). Besides, CDA originates from one of the Marxist notions (the Frankfurt School), namely critical social theory (Fairclough, 2001). Also, CDA is affected by various philosophers’ thoughts, such as hegemony (Gramsci, 1971), ideology (Althusser, 1971), discourse as systems of knowledge (Foucault, 1972), structural linguistics for texts analysis (Halliday, 1978), communication-based version of critical theory for emancipation (Habermas, 1984), historical structuralism (Bakhtin, 1986). With this in mind, CDA is presumed to be able to uncover the type of socio-political or socio-ideologies ingrained and naturalised periodically within discourse (Teo, 2000).

Practically, CDA originates from the premise that language encompasses a social and practical construct typified by a symbiotic association with society (Amer, 2015). Regarding this, Fairclough & Wodak (1997) and Titscher, et. al. (2000) encapsulate principles of CDA into eight points:

1. CDA addresses social problems.
2. Power relations are discursive.
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture.
4. Discourse does ideological work.
5. Discourse is historical.
6. The link between text and society is mediated.
7. Discourse analysis is interpretive and explanatory.
8. Discourse is a form of social action.

Anchored in these principles, Weiss & Wodak (2003) claim that language constructs society and society is constructed by language. Hence,

Kress (1990) adds that CDA emphasises on illuminating how linguistic-discursive practices are connected to “socio-political structures of power and domination.” (p. 85).

Research Methodology

The current study was designed under the umbrella of Critical Discourse Analysis (hereafter, CDA). CDA is a multidisciplinary approach to language attempting to underscore the portrayal of social power and dominance through authenticating the convoluted relationship among texts, utterances, social cognition, power, society and cultures (Van Dijk, 1995). One of the predominant purposes of CDA is to highlight how language is deployed in the texts to fabricate particular ideological stances involving asymmetrical power relations. In other words, CDA does not only accentuate on the linguistic dimensions of language but also the preservation of robust political agendas in terms of the language use (Coffin, 2001). Therefore, language is not presumed as a neutral entity because of its positions in the texts as a medium of negotiation between power and ideology (Burns, 2001).

Basically, this study followed Van Leeuwen’s Sociosemantic-inventory of social actors (Van Leeuwen, 1996) as the analysis framework. Despite there have been 10 elements for identifying social actors based on this analysis framework, this study merely adopted five elements, namely *inclusion & exclusion, role allocation, genericisation & specification, individualization & assimilation and nomination & categorization* (Van Leeuwen, 1996). The consideration of selecting those five elements was based on their appropriateness, relevancy and applicability to probe how social actors are represented (Amer, 2017). In the similar vein, such an analytical framework caters advantages, such as the categorization of the analysed data were based on socio-semantic meaning rather than lexicogrammatical features (Amer, 2017). In this case, the categorization of the power exercise may socially affect heterogeneous social actors and actions. With this in mind, dissimilar social actors were framed based on potential meanings represented in a video transcript of Intercultural Communication classroom activities.

Dealing with the data collection procedures, this study employed document analysis. Document analysis refers to the fact-finding process encompassing documents as a tool to scrutinize social phenomena and analyse individuals or institutional records (Gibson & Brown, 2009). Bowen (2009) argues that “documents provide background and context, additional questions to be asked, supplementary data, a means of tracking change and development, and verification of findings from other data sources” (p. 31).

Correspondingly, a video recording transcript of IC teaching and learning process in the English Education Department of a state University in Indonesia was selected as the data source. The considerations of selecting such a data source were (1) the accessibility of obtaining the data due to one of the researchers of this study is an Intercultural Communication teacher (IC teacher), (2) the originality of the data source enabling the researchers to gain novel and ground-breaking findings and (3) the appropriateness of data and the research issue, exclusively in Intercultural Communication viewed from discursive-analytical approach (e.g. socio-semantic inventory). However, this study only utilised a video recording transcript because of time constraints and prescribed scope of investigation (e.g. investigating social actor representations).

Technically, the video recording transcript was obtained from the researcher's data source of a larger research project on Intercultural Communication consisting of five transcripts. The transcript was extracted from a video of teaching and learning activities in an Intercultural Communication classroom recorded by a student as a participant observer. Such a transcript was the fourth-meeting classroom activities. The selection of this transcript for this inquiry was based on several reasons. First, the fourth-meeting classroom activities transcript fitted the empirical issue of the current study and provided rich factual research context, particularly in relation to the roles of teachers and students as social actors in the classroom. In addition, the transcript reflected the students' strongest intercultural awareness compared to the other transcripts, such as associating their intercultural phenomena with the teaching materials they learned (e.g. experiences of being othered in an intercultural educational context). Additionally, the concept of *Othering* discussed in such a transcript enabled the researchers to explore deeper about typical characteristics of social actors of each participant (e.g. teacher, students, etc.). Likewise, *Othering* was the fourth topic of Intercultural Communication discussing how to avoid the trap of committing overgeneralisation and reduction while depicting and intermingling each other (Holliday, et. al., 2010, p. 4). This topic aimed at raising the students' intercultural communicative competence and intercultural awareness towards their diversities in foreign language learning context (e.g. English). Thus, this study merely accentuated the investigation of a single transcript as the data source.

The participants depicted in the video recording transcript were one teacher (IC teacher) (1 male) and thirty four students (6 males and 28 females) taking part in Intercultural Communication Course. In this course, the students were classified into four classes, namely class A, B, C and D. Nonetheless, due to one of the researchers only taught one of the classes (class D), the focus of this investigation was only on class D. Ethnically, the

participants were Sundanese, Javanese, and Ulun Lampung. They communicate multilingually and multiculturally in their daily activities, such as Basa Sunda, Javanese, Bahasa Indonesia and English. They were sophomores majoring in English Education Department at a state University in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. However, grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this study accentuated on the text-oriented analysis, not the case or practical phenomena occurring in the classrooms.

All the data were analysed through a discursive lens, namely socio-semantic inventory framework of social actors (Van Leeuwen, 1996) as mentioned in the previous section. In the representation analysis of social actors within a video recording transcript of IC teaching and learning process, a number of particular investigative procedures were deployed. Initially, the transcript was specified in clauses. The social actors involving within the transcript were categorised based on professional references (e.g. Intercultural Communication teacher, Hamzah's Junior High School Mathematics teacher, Hamzah's Junior High School Social Sciences teacher, Hamzah's classmates in IC classroom etc.) and ethnic groups (e.g. Sundanese, Javanese, etc.). Each social actor represented in the transcript was selected, analysed and categorised in the clauses level. Even though there were some participants emerging in the transcript, only the social actors involving in the process of *othering* who were spotlighted. This was to avoid the overreaching scope of analysis. Furthermore, the frequency distributions of social actors were examined to identify which social actor dominantly appeared and played their roles in the transcript. By doing so, the identification of power, domination ideology, identity, and hegemony could be actualised accurately. Further, the qualitative analysis was performed to specify the characteristics of social actors and representational process reflected in the language use within the transcript. Additionally, the attributed categories of social actors represented in linguistic features were thematically organised into five elements of Van Leeuwen's Sociosemantic-inventory of social actors (Van Leeuwen, 1996). Eventually, the analysis results were interpreted discursively to unveil the ideology, dominance, identity and self-representation strategy implicitly hidden behind the linguistic features and contexts in which the social actors took part.

To analyse the linguistic features and discursive practices contained within the body text of the sample transcript, this study utilised five elements of social actors representation. More practical stages of analysis were reflected in the following parts.

Inclusion & Exclusion

Social actors are not only included to tailor attention and intentions of the target audiences but also excluded (omitted) from the texts represented (Van Leeuwen, 2008). In particular, inclusion is the act of including a social actor or a group of social actors to the social events to establish a discursive representation (e.g. *Israel's envoy to Cairo returned to Jerusalem last night with details of Hamas's position*. GA-GU-16-JAN-02) (Van Leeuwen, 2008; Amer, 2017). On the other hand, *exclusion* is the act of constructing a discursive representation by excluding a social actor or a group of social actors from a certain social event (Van Leeuwen, 1996; 2008). *Exclusion* is classified into two types, namely *suppression* and *backgrounding*. *Suppression* is a type of *exclusion* "there is no reference to the social actor (s) in question anywhere in the text" (Van Leeuwen, 1996). For instance, "two people were killed in the unrest in the capital" (Rashidi & Rasti, 2012, p. 2). Meanwhile, *backgrounding* refers to the act where "the excluded social actors in a specific activity pop up later in another part of the clause, sentence or text." (Van Leeuwen, 1996). As an example, "to preserve the cultural heritage, the government invited the scholars" (p. 7).

Role allocation

Role allocation differentiates between the *activated* and *passivated roles* assigned to social actors (Amer, 2017). *Activated roles* refer to a strategy of representing the social actors as the active and dynamic subjects in the social events (e.g. "the Islamist group also wants Gaza's crossings into Israel reopened after three years of the economic blockade". GA-GU-17-JAN-02) (Amer, 2017, p. 6). Conversely, *passivated roles* are the social actors represented as the objects undertaking an activity. Specifically, *passivated roles* are categorised into two main elements, such as *subjected* and *beneficialised*. Van Leeuwen (2008, p. 44) contends that "Subjected social actors are treated as objects in the representation." For instance, *an intake of some 54,000 skilled immigrants is expected this year*. Alternatively, *beneficialised social actors* are other people or parties who benefit from an activity (e.g. 4.7 22,000 Hong Kong Chinese arrived last year, bringing bulging wallets to cities like Vancouver) (Van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 45).

Genericisation & specification

Genericisation & specification signify how the text producers apply either *generic reference* or *specific reference* in terms of social actors representation (Van Leeuwen, 1996; Amer, 2017). *Specific reference* is identifiable individuals (Van Leeuwen, 1996). Principally, they (the

references) are the actual people existing in a real world (Amer, 2017), such as “in this conflict, *many Palestinians praise Hamas as resisters, but Israel contends the group has purposely endangered civilians by fighting in and around populated areas* GA-NYT-05-JAN-02” (Amer, 2015, p. 90). Contrariwise, the generic reference refers to the social actors represented as generic categorisation of people (e.g. *non-European immigrants make up 6.5 percents of the population*) (Van Leeuwen 1996, p. 47).

Individualisation & assimilation

Individualisations refer to the specification of social actors as the individuals or single entities (Van Leeuwen 1996; Amer, 2015). As an illustration, *Ehud Olmert, Israel's prime minister, reportedly told a cabinet meeting the fighting in Gaza would be "long, painful and difficult"*. GA-GU-29-DEC-01 (Amer, 2015, p. 90). On the other side, *assimilation* is defined as the specification of social actors as a collective party (Amer, 2015). Theoretically, *assimilation* is classified into two types namely *collectivisation* and *aggregation*. *Aggregation* is a strategy of quantifying participants in groups and considering them as statistical numeratives (Van Leeuwen, 1996). Further, Amer (2015) exemplified *aggregation* as in total at least **541 Palestinians** have died since Israel's operation began, with more than 2,400 injured. GA-GU-06-JAN-03. In contrast, *collectivisation* is presumed as a quantifying strategy without mentioning the specific number of social actors or statistical numeratives of social actors (Van Leeuwen, 1996), such as **the main security headquarters in Gaza City** [were] hit again and four were killed when most of its buildings were flattened. GA-GU-29-DEC-01 (Amer, 2015).

Nomination & categorisation

The nomination is a strategy of nominating or addressing people through the use of proper nouns (Van Leeuwen, 1996; Post, 2009; Amer, 2017). Additionally, Van Leeuwen, (1996) stipulates that *nomination* can be realized into three strategies, notably *formal nomination* (e.g. Senator Harris), *semi-formal nomination* (e.g. Jack Harris) and *informal nomination* (e.g. Jack) (Post, 2009, p. 26).

In accordance with *categorisation*, there are two major subdivisions, namely *functionalisation* and *identification*. *Functionalisation* is the activities, professions, and roles of social actors (for instance, interviewer, crewman, pianist, etc.) (Post, 2009; Amer, 2015). Even so, *identification* is “what the social actors are referred to, i.e. how they appear rather than their activities” (Amer, 2015, p. 92). Exclusively, *identification* is classified into three types, viz. *classification*, *relational identification* and *physical identification* (Van Leeuwen, 1996). First, *classification* refers to a strategy

in which social actors are addressed based on certain major categories (particular community or institution) through differentiating people into classes (Van Leeuwen, 1996), such as the deployment of age, gender, provenance, class, wealth, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation (e.g. African-American) (Post, 2009). Second, *relational identification* deals with how social actors are represented based on their personal, kinship or work relations (Van Leeuwen, 1996; Post, 2009; Amer, 2015). For example, the utilisation of possessivated or closest sets of nouns, such as friend, mother, wife (i.e. my friend) (Post, 2009). Eventually, *physical identification* provides “a good deal in stories; sometimes only when a character is introduced or sometimes throughout a story”. As an example, *two young cousins* and *a 5-year-old boy* (Amer, 2015, p. 92).

Generally, these elements were assumed to be able to explore the language in the context unearthing typical attitudes, ideologies and worldviews represented through language (Adampa, 1999).

Findings and Discussion

Representation of Hamzah (the student) as the social actor in the classroom

Hamzah, one of the students in the Intercultural Communication classroom, was illustrated to suffer miscellaneous unfriendly past learning experiences when he was at a Javanese-situated junior high school as exemplified in extract 1.

Extract 1

IC teacher: Your story is very interesting and I would like to hear it, because Sundanese is, what we call it, insulted by Javanese teacher. So, I want you to continue the study. Silahkan.

Extract 2

Student A: Okay, we are here. We want to continue our last material about
[pronouncing it using weird accent] othering
Other students: [laughing]
Student A: We will continue the story from Hamzah
Teacher: Okay, **Hamzah**. Please.

In extract 1, the IC teacher requested Hamzah to continue his previous presentation to gain a complete explanation of his intercultural experiences during learning at a junior high school in central Java. In his last elucidation, Hamzah argued that the Sundanese were insulted by a

Mathematics teacher (a Javanese ethnic person). The IC teacher included Hamzah to be a center of attention of his IC classmates in the light of providing authentic teaching materials through his real experiences. The IC teacher deployed active voice pattern to request Hamzah to present his presentation materials in front of the class. In addition, the word ‘Sundanese’ in the above mentioned extract indicates that the junior high school Social sciences teacher of Hamzah (JST) humiliated not only Hamzah as the only Sundanese student learning there but also the Sundanese in general. This is indicated by including Sundanese as the ethnic group, not as an individual. Viewed from geographical and demographic facets, the Sundanese dominantly live in West Java. As a result, Hamzah learning in a central-Javanese situated school seemingly became a minority.

Extract 3

Hamzah: Yes, **I don't understand**...what....
 IC teacher: What **they** are talking about [helping him finish his statement]
 Hamzah: Yes, what **they** are talking about **me**. And, **I remember that when I was still 9th grade of MTS, my Math teacher said that if, she didn't realize that I am Sundanese from west java, and she said if the Sundanese is the generation of dog.**

Referring to the extract 3, Hamzah is excluded from his academic environment due to his junior high school classmates and his teacher communicated in Javanese. This situation implies that Hamzah was ignored and isolated from his surroundings. As an example, although Hamzah's classmates presumably realized that Hamzah had not been able to comprehend or produce Javanese well, his classmates preferred to speak in Javanese. Consequently, Hamzah encountered obstacles to communicate and cooperate with his classmates. This signifies that *othering* occurred in the classroom activities because they classified themselves into *Us* and *Them* group separated by dissimilar language use.

Another fact demonstrates that Hamzah obtained racial, stereotypical, discriminatory, humiliating and intimidating actions from his junior high school Mathematics teacher (JMT). For instance, Hamzah's JMT argued that **the Sundanese were the generation of dog**. Indeed, this type of utterance potentially downgrades Hamzah as a human since he was equalized with an animal, namely dog. In other words, the utterances of Hamzah's JMT do not only demotivate Hamzah to learn in the classroom but also dehumanise him psychologically. Analytically, Hamzah's JMT individualised Hamzah as an object of disgrace. Moreover, the most salient lexicalization of this humiliation is the nomination of ‘dog’.

The Intercultural Communication teacher

Different from the previous representation, IC teacher is symbolised as a supportive and tolerant actor for he suggested his students to perform positive behaviours as delineated as follows:

Extract 4

IC teacher: Okay. So, we can consider that as a teacher, we should be a wise teacher.
 Students: Yes.

Extract 5

IC teacher: We do not discriminate. We do not differentiate whether this is from Javanese, this is from Batak, this is from Madurese, correct? So, there must not be any different treatments. Okay, please continue.

The extracts 4 and 5 report that IC teacher utilised the inclusive ‘we’ to include his students and himself in a similar perspective in terms of understanding his students' roles as the prospective English teacher in the future. He reminded his students to be a wise teacher possessing not only well-established cognitive competence but also pedagogical and behavioural competences. Also, he advised his students to be aware of diversity. As a matter of fact, he verbalised the word ‘discriminate’, ‘differentiate’ and ‘any different treat’ implying that he raised his students’ awareness to keep unity in diversity in their lives. Accordingly, he indirectly emphasised that differences should not be treated as a source of conflict but as a tool to strengthen fraternity.

Extract 6

Hamzah: I already told him about the kingdom of Galuh and Padjadjaran, but he didn't want to admit it. We often argued each other, but I always lost because I had no friends.
 Hamzah's
 classmates: waah, [showing sympathy]
 IC teacher: Okay, it doesn't matter. They are your friends now [pointing at students in the class]

In extract 6, when Hamzah told that he was ignored by his junior high school classmates during a classroom discussion, IC teacher encouraged him to be optimistic by stipulating that he currently has friends in Intercultural Communication classroom. For example, Hamzah endeavored to convince his junior high school teacher and classmates that

Sundanese had *Galuh* and *Padjadjaran* kingdoms to counter negative discursive identity produced by them. This proves that IC teacher attempted to facilitate Hamzah in relieving his psychological shocks after remembering his unpleasant past learning experiences in his junior high school.

Hamzah's classmates in the Intercultural Communication Course

Hamzah's classmates in Intercultural Communication course are also represented positively as illustrated in the subsequent extracts:

Extract 7

- IC teacher: Okay, it doesn't matter. They are your friends now
[pointing at students in the class]
- Hamzah's
Classmates: Yiiii [cheering him up]. We are Sundanese.
- IC teacher: Please continue your presentation. It is very interesting for us.

Once IC teacher motivated Hamzah to think positively that he still has friends, particularly in Intercultural Communication course, Hamzah's classmates showed their enthusiasm by saying "Yiiii" (cheering him up). We are Sundanese." Sociologically, they welcome Hamzah to be a part of them. Besides, Hamzah's classmates included Hamzah to their in-group (*Us*) by mentioning the inclusive 'we'. Again, IC teacher reinforced the impacts of classmates' encouragement of Hamzah by inserting the pronoun 'us'.

Extract 8

- IC teacher: What did you feel when your friends supported you at that time?
- Hamzah: I felt a bit relieved because it made me think that I was not alone. One day, there was a man challenge me to fight.
- Hamzah's
Classmates: Oooooo [wondering, interested in the story]
- Classmates: Fight back, bro. bring MENWA with you [making a joke]

After Hamzah presented that he had ever been challenged to a fight by his Javanese junior high school classmate, his Intercultural Communication classmates sympathized with his outrageous situation at that time. Such sympathy was reflected from their shocking expressions as exemplified in extract 8. However, they provoked Hamzah to revenge his Javanese junior high school classmate by bringing *Resimen Mahasiswa* (University Student Regiment) to help him fight back. Though such an utterance was only a joke, they potentially encourage Hamzah to misbehave (i.e. to get into a fight).

Hamzah's Junior High School Mathematics teacher

The following extract discloses junior high school Mathematics teacher of Hamzah (JMT) misplaced herself as a Mathematics teacher in the classroom because she explicated teaching materials out of his expertise and discipline (e.g. History, Cultural Studies, and Anthropology), namely Sundanese origin.

Extract 9

Hamzah: Yes, what **they** are talking about **me**. And, **I** remember that when **I** was still on 9th grade of MTs, **my math teacher** said that **if, she** didn't realize that **I am Sundanese from West Java**, and **she** said **if the Sundanese is the generation of dog**.

Hamzah's

classmates: What? Seriously?

Hamzah: Yes, it is what is it? Because she talked about, what is it?

Hamzah's

classmates: Sangkuriang

Hamzah: Yes, Sangkuriang

Based on the extract 9, junior high school Social Sciences teacher of Hamzah is represented as an intolerant, dehumanising, discriminatory and oppressing social actor because of her misbehaviours and despising utterances towards Hamzah as a minority (Sundanese student) during teaching and learning process in the classroom. More specifically, she expressed a racial and dehumanising utterance, such as "the Sundanese is the generation of dog." Her claim probably referred to one of Sundanese folklore, namely *Sangkuriang* whose mother was *Dayang Sumbi* and father was *Tumang* (a mythological dog entity).

Hamzah's Junior High School Social Sciences teacher

The junior high school social sciences teacher of Hamzah is represented as a racial, stereotyping, dominant and provoking social actor due to her unscientific, groundless and agitating claims towards Hamzah as the only Sundanese student in that class. The following dialogue exposed that the Sundanese was clearly excluded from their own territory.

Extract 10 revealed the unscientific, baseless and careless arguments towards the Sundanese as the second largest ethnic group in Indonesia by claiming that they only possess a strait (the *Sunda* strait) instead of an island. This implies that she ideologically instilled her students to commit primordial attitudes to the different ethnic group members, notably Sundanese. She probably anchored her argument in the literal interpretation

of Java island itself. Geographically, even though the Sundanese inhabit Western part of Java island, they do not belong to the Javanese ethnic group members. This is represented from striking differences among West Java, Central Java and East Java, such as cultures, beliefs, philosophy, language, history, etc. so that she made a joke based on those differences which in fact it was an insult. Ironically, as a Social Sciences teacher, she played her role contradictory to her nature whose jobs to introduce Indonesia consisting of various islands, ethnic groups, beliefs, cultures, languages, and so forth. As a result, her students tend to grow their ethnocentric, intolerant and suspicious attitudes towards diversity. The worst, the students might internalise such unacceptable attitudes to build their identities as the Indonesians.

Extract 10

- IC teacher: Okay, please continue.
 Hamzah: And then, I said before [looking at his friend] that my social teacher said that **Sundanese** only has **strait no island**.
 Students: **Sundanese strait**?
 Hamzah: Why do **they** live on **this Java island**?_She actually made **a joke** of it but it sounded strange to me.

Closing remarks

Viewed from the emergent discursive features in the transcript of Intercultural communication classroom activities, *inclusion & exclusion, role allocation, genericisation & specification, individualization & assimilation and nomination & categorization* are identified distinctively based on each social actor involved. First, Hamzah is described as a Sundanese student undergoing various unpleasant past experiences during learning at a Javanese-situated junior high school. To illustrate, he procured racial, stereotypical, discriminatory, humiliating and intimidating social actions from his junior high school Mathematics and Social Sciences teachers because of his typical differences with the ethnic majority (Javanese) in such a context. Even, he almost became a physical violence victim of one of his Javanese classmates. As a result, he is represented as victimised, oppressed, intimidated and minoritised social actor.

Second, the junior high school mathematic teacher of Hamzah is represented as an intolerant, dehumanising, discriminatory and oppressing teacher because of her inappropriate behaviours and insulting utterances towards Hamzah as a minor ethnic group student (Sundanese student) during teaching and learning process in the classroom. As an example, one of the most shocking and racial utterances verbalised is “the Sundanese is the

generation of dog.” Pedagogically, this misbehavior must not be performed by the educators since the educators are normative as a paragon and agent of change in social life.

Thirdly, the junior high school Social Sciences teacher of Hamzah is represented as a racial, stereotyping, dominant and provoking social actor because of her unscientific, groundless and agitating claims towards the Sundanese student. Her role in the classroom markedly contradicted to her nature as a Social Sciences teacher responsible for building characters and strengthening the tolerant identity of her students. Moreover, the Intercultural Communication teacher is represented as the social actor endeavoring to encourage his students to be tolerant, critical, supportive and open-minded social actors because of his acts responding to Hamzah’s presentation proportionally. For instance, he suggested his students act fairly to everyone, including those originating from different ethnic groups. Furthermore, Hamzah’s classmates in IC classroom are represented as sympathetic, supportive, friendly and reactionary social actors because of their responses addressed to Hamzah’s presentation. Although they responded to Hamzah’s presentation jokingly, they showed their intimacy and solidarity by mitigating Hamzah’s despondency of his past learning experience at Javanese-situated junior high school.

Discursively speaking, Hamzah, IC teacher, and Hamzah's classmates are represented as positive social actors. On the contrary, the junior high school Mathematics and Social Sciences teachers of Hamzah are categorised into negative social actor representations. Further, each social actor produces and upholds their ideologies to sustain their identities and hegemony. On the whole, they belong to non-essentialists and essentialists viewed from Intercultural Communication lens.

However, the limitations of the current study lie on the incomplete deployment of discursive features of *Socio-semantic inventory*, inadequate corpus representativeness (data sources), rigid social actors selection and textual analysis. For these reasons, future studies are expected to embrace a holistic use of discursive features, entangle representative and comparable corpora (e.g. different corpora), flexible social actors selection and multimodal lens of examination.

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