NARRATING STUDENTS' IDENTITY
TO PROMOTE CRITICAL LANGUAGE AWARENESS

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Abstract

This paper explores the use of students' narration of their personal and social identity to build their sensitivity towards the language form, use, and context in pedagogical arena. It shows how the students construct their multiple identities when they revealed a simple part of their own life history trajectories in one particular time and how these identities are transformed or conserved as they enter a new discourse community. A narrative analysis is employed to document the students' identification and negotiation of meaning as a social process in identity formation. The stories reveal three emerging themes showing students' raising critical language awareness; a strong ethnical identity of Silvani, a Sundanese-Javanese child growing as Betawinese living in Sundanese environment, realising Sonny's use of code-mixing in many inappropriate contexts, and considering self-belief in Barley's classroom interaction.

Keywords: *Critical Language Awareness, Personal Identity, Social Identity, Narrative Inquiry*

INTRODUCTION

Critical Language Awareness (CLA) in language classroom, an important subject facilitating the students to gain knowledge on how to think comprehensively about any phenomena on language whether in its form, context, or use, becomes one of the crucial issues. What is critical in Critical Language Awareness is the space of 'distantiation' from which new understanding dialectically unfolds and new ways of perceiving and acting and new discourse practices can arise (Males, 2000). CLA, recognized as an approach to language teaching based on a critical sociocultural theory of language and critical discourse analysis, believes that the use of language is a form of social practice and that all social practices are embedded in specific socio historical contexts where existing social relations are reproduced or contested and where different interests are served (Janks, 1999 p.111). It is particularly concerned with the relationship between language and power – with the way discourse is policed (Foucault, 1970: 120); with the way variety in language is suppressed and unity emphasized (Bourdieu, 1991); with the way all discourse is positioned in the struggle to represent (re-present) different versions of the world as legitimate (Fairclough, 2014); with the power of discourse to construct subjectivity (Gee, 2004).

One way to elaborate the students' critical language awareness is through narrating self-identity. This is due to a belief which Turner et al. 1987 in Stets and Burke (2000) argue, "identity [...] deals with intergroup relations-that is, how people come to see themselves as members of one group/category (the in-group) in comparison with another (the out-group), and the consequences of this categorization, such as ethnocentrism." Here, however, it is addressed on the view of social identity

to what occurs when one becomes an in-group member; and later we compare this with the view of identity theory on what occurs when one takes on a role. Having a particular social identity means being at one with a certain group, being like others in the group, and seeing things from the group's perspective. In contrast, having a particular role identity means acting to fulfil the expectations of the role, coordinating and negotiating interaction with role partners, and manipulating the environment to control the resources for which the role has responsibility. Implementing Wenger's social theory (1998) about identity formation, the students are directed to reveal any information they should provide to give information as many as possible about themselves. Identity is a dynamic process. Wenger proposes that identity formation is a dual process of identification and negotiation of meaning. It involves the interaction of two constituent processes; participation and reification. Participation refers to a process of taking part and also to the relations with others that reflect this process. It suggests both action and connection (Wenger, 1998, p. 57). It is the lived experiences of belonging that indicates who we are. Meanwhile, according to Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman (2004), reification means that we can imagine something to be real when it is not.

Identity in this context is defined as a long and flux process of human which has vital position in language education. It was regarded as a project of the self (a concept equally difficult to define) and as something to do with 'the mind/ body/soul/brain' and therefore subjective, internal and unique (Riley, 2007). Tracy (2002) in Hua (2014) differs identities in two dimensions; stable vs. situated and

social vs. personal which is elaborated through following definitions:

- Master identities refer to those aspects of personhood (e.g. gender, ethnicity, age, nationality) which are relatively stable and do not change from situation to situation.
- Interactional identities refer to specific and situational roles people enact in a communicative context. A person can be a college student, a volunteer for Oxfam, a passenger and a mother.
- Relational identities refer to interpersonal relationships such as power difference or social distance between people involved in a given situation. They are negotiable and context-specific. For example, in an appraisal meeting, there is power difference between a manager and an employer whose work-related performance is assessed. If they meet in a lift, however, the power difference is less an issue.
- Personal identities refer to personality, attitudes and character which are relatively stable and unique.

Though language awareness has the merit of involving learners in the purely linguistic dimension of language, it ignores the fact that as a social phenomenon, it is best studied in its context of use (Kouassi, 2016). Since this study concerns on how the students experienced their social classroom contexts which shaped their social identity, Smaldino (2017) highlights two crucial features of this identity type. First, people care a lot about social identity, and place high value on clearly identifying to others who they are and to which groups they belong. Second, social identity is regarded as 'context dependent.' Who am I, and how I express that to you, depends on

where I am, who you are, and who else is around. We are all many things, and we are different things in different contexts, with different people in different time and places. Thus, diverse responses may likely appear due to particular given contexts encountered by the students.

METHOD

To obtain the data, interviews to three students taking CLA subject were conducted. Then, the interview results were transformed into narration following the concept of narrative analysis to explore the students' personal experiences about their own life phenomena. According to Berger (1997:4) a narrative is a story, and stories tell about things that have happened or are happening to people, animals, and aliens from outer space, etc. Akinsanya and Bach (2014) sistematically depict how to generate stories by the following structures:

1. Goal (Personal Experience Narrative)

A look at the personal experience narrative and elements of the narrative structure and evaluative language used in oral and written narratives. (Ozyıldırım, 2006) p.1209" [28-32] Narrative analysis in this form is readily explored to view the various parts (i.e. factors) merging to gather to form the narrative which, in this case, is of the personal experience form.

2. Factor 1 (Abstract)

"The abstract summarizes the whole story and consists of one or two clauses at the beginning of a narrative. (Ozyıldırım, 2006) p. 1211" [33-37] An overview of the narrative, while not overly necessary, is very instructive in giving the reader or intended audience a fore glance at what the narrative is all about.

3. Factor 2 (Orientation)

"Orientation gives information about the time, place, characters, and their activity or the situation in what will follow (Ozyıldırım, 2006) p. 1211" [38-42]. The orientation provides the necessary information regarding the time frame, location and characters involved in the narrative. Afterall, readers should know the cast of characters performing in a play.

4. Factor 3 (Complicating action)

"Complicating action clauses are narrative clauses that inform the audience about what happened (Ozyıldırım, 2006) p. 1211" [43-47]. This is the nitty-gritty of the narrative as it goes into detail about the content of the narrative i.e. what actually happened. This forms the body of the narrative.

5. Factor 4 (Resolution)

"Resolution informs the audience about how the complicating action was resolved. This section indicates the termination of a series of events by releasing the tension (Ozyıldırım, 2006) p. 1211" [48-52]. There can never be a Fig. 1 Path Diagram Showing Factors That Affect the Personal Experience Narrative beginning without an end. The resolution ties in the narrative, effectively concluding the story as told.

6. Factor 5 (Evaluation)

"Evaluation forms the emotional side of the narrative and explains why the story is worth telling (Ozyıldırım, 2006) p. 1211" [53-57]. This is where it gets pretty interesting as the narrator uses the evaluation phase to communicate how he/she felt during the time the narrative took place.

7. Factor 6 (coda)

"Coda clauses are located at the end of narratives and indicate that the story is over, bridging the gap between the narrative proper and the present, or sometimes providing a short summary of the narrative (Ozyıldırım, 2006) p. 1211" [58-62]. This contains what can be referred to as the "lesson learnt" from the narrative. Every narrative is in the past. This question is "how did it affect your present?"

Three students taking CLA subject at a university in Tasikmalaya that have conducted a mini research on investigating their personal and social identity, two males and one female, sincerely accepted when being requested to be the participants. For gaining the information about the participants regarding the issue they have encountered during the process of revealing their (1) master, (2) relational, (3) interactional, and (4) personal identity in CLA class, we conducted semi-structured interviews to them, on 9th of May 2018 with the length about 8.51 to 10.05 minutes for each and continued with another semi-structured interviews on the following days. The first participant is Silvani *(pseudoname)*, a female student of English Education Department from Jakarta. The second participant is Sonny (*pseudoname)*, a male student of English Education Department from Ciamis and the third participant is Barley *(pseudoname)*. He is also a male student of English Education Departement of Siliwangi University originally from Tasikmalaya city.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Result
A strong ethnical identity of Silvani, a Sundanese-Javanese child growing as Betawinese living in Sundanese environment

Silvani has grown up in Bekasi, a city located near to the capital of Indonesia, Jakarta, where the local language used is Betawi language. She is an intercultural marriage child in which her parents are Javanese (people coming from Java tribe) and Sundanese (people from Sunda tribe). At home, to run a plausible and comprehensible communication, her parents definitely avoid to talk by their own local language but rather use Bahasa Indonesia (the lingua franca of Indonesian people) as a daily basis communication tool. Thus, she is accustomed to speak Bahasa Indonesia, and her environment also requires her to do so, even though sometimes it is mixed with Betawi language. She is a talkative person so she has a lot of friends in Bekasi or even Jakarta. When she talks, you will think that she is mad at her interlocutors because of the high intonation she used. But, in her environment, it is common. This condition is then brought into her classroom context, which furthermost impacts on her ability to adapt with new environment, especially when she took Critical Language Awareness class.

When the first time she came to Tasikmalaya, she absolutely cannot direcltly understand its local language, Sundanese, since it has very distinct characteristic with the language she speaks. People she met will directly realize that she is a Betawinese by hearing her accent. So in the first semester she did not have a lot of friends. It is a little hard for her to adapt in this city, even some of the local

Sundanese people have ever been offended with her high intonation every time she spoke to them. She always tries to learn Sundanese language to make a better relation in Tasikmalaya. Even though she is still rude in speaking Sundanese, she is the person who could be influenced easily.

One of her friends contends:

Excerpt 1,

"I agree if she is stubborn person, yet she could be easily influenced"

(line 18-20) Taken on Feb 23, 2018

Now she could speak Sundanese even though a bit impolite. Yet, she thinks it is better to make a good relationship with Sundanese people. Honestly, her close friends never take it as a problem whether she speaks Sundanese or Bahasa Indonesia. They are the best friends for her, the greatest friends for her and they always treat her well whereas she usually acts selfish to them. Another friend argues:

Excerpt 2,

"I think she is a talkative and selfish person…" Taken on Feb 23, 2018

(line 24-25)

She admitted that she is a garrulous person, since she always thinks that talking is her hobby.

Due to the process of her personal identification, she realized that she needs to reconstruct her language and her character for making a better future where she will probably meet more people with more diverse bakgrounds. More specifilcally, it also aims to build a better relationship with her classmates and teachers in the classroom.

Realising Sonny's use of code-mixing in many inappropriate contexts

Sonny lives in Sadananya, Ciamis, West Java. People usually call him as "Sunboy" since he was in senior high shool and he tends to be happy when people call him by that name. He thought that people better call him "Sunboy" rather than"Sonny". He considered that "Sonny" is only his family nick name, therefore he prefers to use his name as "Sonny" when he is at home. He added that he felt better if people call him as "Sunboy" except his family. If it happened he might feel shy, he said that his parents have given him the name (Sonny) and he changed it. Sonny has learned more than three languages; Japanese, English, Sundanese and Bahasa Indonesia which often caused him doing the code-mixing such as Indonesian with Japanese and also Indonesian with English. He noted that he often made such kind of code-mixing before he took Critical Language Awareness class and it happened almost on his everyday life which subsequently he tried to avoid it. He thought that it has two different impacts to his life and those depend on the context (formal and informal) of situation. The most problem that affected his life because of this code-mixing was happened when he was required to present the materials in front of the class and it caused him felt really embarrassed. He told that the last time he did it when he was in Critical Discourse Analysis class. He spoke "*siswa mempresentasikan apa yang telah mereka 'diskusikan' di depan kelas*". The word "*diskusikan*" is a mixed word derived from English (discussion) and Bahasa Indonesia (*diskusi*). Suddenly, the audiences laughed and he felt really embarrassed at the moment. In different case, when he made it in informal context and people laughed on it, he considered it as a fun thing. We concluded that this participant mostly felt embarrassed when he made code-mixing during his speech if he did it and people

laughed on it. Nevertheless, if he did it in informal context, he would not feel embarrassed but he would consider it as an entertainment.

Sonny was a boy with silent characteristic, talked less with a loud voice, and often answered anything in simple words, added a little smile on it, and preferred to end the conversation. But, it came upside down since he entered senior high school. The situation has really forced him to talk a lot there, and had to face many people that he did not know yet which confirms the probability of personal identity fluidity. The challenge was he was not really good at speaking standardized Bahasa Indonesia since he comes from a village with strong Sundanese language accent and behaviour. When he has class presentations, he often mixes his language with Sundanese language that makes his friends laugh at him, that is code-mixing.

Sunboy, what his friends address him now, is considered to represent his cheerfulness. He often makes jokes with his friends, although some say that he is weird because of many 'disgusting' sounds he could produce spontaneously to express his feeling and it comes randomly. After joining Critical Language Awareness subject, he found that he had a problem dealing with his language, it is about code-mixing or changing two or more words into another language. Sonny then puts some of his attention to this situation because it is really matter when he is speaking in English or Indonesian, he often mixes them with Sundanese language or even worse with Japanese language because he learns Japanese as well.

In Critical Language Awareness class, he ever did a presentation about the language phenomena that happened. He remembered when his friends responded to his presentation and gave him some advices about the problems dealing with code-mixing. His friend said that he ever experienced it, he often speaks Indonesian language mixed with Sundanese language, but he realized what is going on and tried to avoid it by giving an answer in the same language with the question(s) or responding the conversation in the same language with his friends. There might be due to multiple languages that he used in daily life, such as he often sings Japanese songs, he also uses English when he has classroom presentation, and sometimes his friends talked in Indonesian languages, and when he arrived at home, he speaks Sundanese language as usual. Those then become the factors causing him to do code-mixing.

He was eager to share his experience to the others because he thought that out there, somewhere in this world, someone might have similar problems as his and he hopes that they can build their critical language awareness to recognizing any relevant problems in their pedagogical arena. To him, code-mixing is not really bad at all if it is only used in informal situation. According to the article he read, researchers found that there are complex grammatical structures involved in code-mixing or code-switching. But, it is different when it comes to formal situation that code-mixing will be confusing the audience, so that is why code-mixing should never be found on formal situation. The last thing is that he starts to become aware of repeatedly using code-mixing in daily conversation especially in academic contexts. Thus, he needs to reduce the code-mixing usage in inappropriate situations.

Considering Self-Belief in Barley's Classroom Interaction

He lives in Tasikmalaya, West Java. He has been living and studying in an Islamic boarding school since he enrolled to senior high school, which then changed his life a lot especially on how to socialize with his opposite sex. The first time he enrolled to university level, he was feeling the culture shock when he could not avoid any kind of interactions with his opposite sex. He tended to be an introvert person and he did not talk too much. As time goes, he tried to adapt with his new environment and he realized that he could not be introvert person all the time. Even though he did not feel the significant change, but he still tries to adapt so that he can develop better relationship.

Barley believes that everyone in this world has ever been astonished when moving from one place to another and adapt with new academic environment as part of culture shock, and it happened to him once he embarked the university level. It is because of several reasons, as: academic stuff, personal adjustment, and social adaptation.

He was born in Tasikmalaya twenty years ago by the name Barley Mohatta. Since he has been studying in a modern boarding school about five years, he has got many alterations of character including the manner how to interact with other people especially with women. It was heard quite awkward, especially for those who did not know his background. They would consider him as an abnormal person as a male who keep staying away from ladies, not talking to them, not even greeting them and doing hand-shaking.

The first time he enrolled the university, he thought everything will be running alright. The only problem was how to adapt with the new class situation that he did not feel when he was student of senior high school where the both of men and women have separated classes. So that, he tended to avoid every kind of interaction involving women at that time. He did not really care whether people will judge him as an arrogant person, but he only tried to maintain the norm and value he believed in this far.

Day by day passed, he has been trying to find the solution on how to behave to overcome his problem, so that he can interact with the opposite sex without any anxiety but still keep the norm and value he believed. Although eventually, unfortunately, he still could not find 'elegant' ways to solve this, he just tries to keep his attitude to them and they also try to respect him as well.

He also thinks that every possibility might happen to everyone in this world. It depends on themselves whether to respond it positively or even negatively. Through this story, he can realize his own lack in building a good relationship among human and also this challenges him a lot to find the best manner to overcome this problem. So that is why he needs to share his experience here, hopefully it can be worth for other people in overcoming their social problem especially.

Discussion

In response to the case happened to Silvani (theme 1), Smaldino (2017) highlights two crucial features of this identity type. First, people care a lot about social identity, and place high value on clearly identifying to others who they are and to which groups they belong. Second, social identity is regarded as 'context dependent.' Who am I, and how I express that to you, depends on where I am, who

you are, and who else is around. We are all many things, and we are different things in different contexts, with different people in different time and places, where according to Janks (1999), it can be strenuous to everyone in the classroom and that it is important to have a good relationship with the learners before commencing. Thus, it developed new understandings about language, began to recognize the expansiveness of their linguistic toolkits, and came to legitimize variation and language shift as well as try on critical identities (Amato, 2015). Although Silvani has a very strong identity on herown, she eventually needs to try to adapt with other people from other culture since it is supposed to be a means to unite people as she ever said and as a means to open a dialogue between cultures. Savignon and Sysoyev (2002) reveal that this kind of perception envisages language learners as open-minded representatives of their L1 community and subjects engaged in a dialogue of cultures. This type of dialogue will result in a balanced and meaningful relationship as Mokhtarnia (2011) depicts, 'a utilitarian relationship between cultures, on the other hand, crops up when one of the cultures in contact imposes its values and norms leading the other culture to unquestioned acceptance of the conventions of the first culture.' In addition, the existence of 'the inequality deriving from the stereotyping of endogenously constructed groups can be greater than the inequality that can emerge when perceived identity is not malleable' (Kim and Loury, 2019). Therefore, positioning self equality and others in a new atmosphere becomes crucial factor determining the success of communication, notably in classroom interaction.

Theme 2 involving the code mixing phenomena encountered by Sonny is explained as a personal modification as Young, Natrajan-Tyagi, and Platt (2014) contend that it is easier to "modify self-images associated with personal identity (unique character traits) rather than social identity (shared traits within group)". Meanwhile, Brice (2000) considered it as a speech-language pathology. The experts in this field, speech-language pathologists, have viewed code switching or code mixing to be indicators for language proficiency and typically have voiced the opinion that its presence is a symptom of a language disorder (Cheng & Butler, 1989; Reyes, 2004). From the educators' viewpoint, this phenomenon needs to have special attention, since Sert (2005) emphasized the functions in utilizing code-switching and its undertstanding in which this understanding will provide language teachers with a heightened awareness of its use in classroom discourse and will obviously lead to betterment of instruction by either eliminating it or dominating its use during the foreign language instruction. Similar to this case, Nordin, Ali, Zubir, and Sadjirin (2013) conducted a research which the findings suggest that the use of code switching is necessary when the situation requires the use of first language in the classroom to enable the learners to become more confident in mastering English. Code switching was also used to convey ideas in specific situations and to enhance solidarity in the first language (Azlan and Narasuman, 2013). In short, the use of code-switching will be helpful in certain situation and could become harmful in such inappropriate condition. Accordingly, the students need to be more sensitive to speculate the precise timing to use it.

Barley experienced a shock after having a significant shift from his former environment to the recent one. It is, according to Kulaksiz (2015), due to the impact of culture in which individuals have a tendency to perceive the reality within the context of their own culture which results in a 'created' reality rather than the empirically defined one. It brings about the liability for us to consider that our reality is the correct one. Regarding the issue of Barley in theme 3, as it had built his mind-sets, he is trying to find out strategies to overcome his problem, such as suggested by Winkelman (1994), strategies for coping cultural shock and adaptation include preparation, 'transition adjustments, personal and social relations, cultural and social interaction rules, and conflict resolution and intercultural effectiveness skills. Resolution of cultural shock is best achieved by a proactive cognitive orientation.' Moreover, teachers also play another important role in helping the students encounter problem like Barley's since Caner and Tertemiz (2015) contend that one of the vital responsibilities of teachers is to create and maintain a supportive, positive and orderly classroom environment conducive to learning. Barley could not stand by himself, the teacher has to supportively assist him by giving interventions in classroom management for instance, they added.

CONCLUSION

Every language classroom provides many challenges both for teachers and students. Critical Language Awareness class, the place where the research took place, has answered the needs of students' language awareness existence in pedagogical contexts practically. It has been revealed by giving them chances to address their identity at first. The stories of their personal and social experiences would be utilized to be a means of being critical when it is narrated structurally and evident-based. Thus, facilitating the students with practical knowledge of self-narration has risen their critical language awareness which determine their future actions. It is acknowledged that this paper is still weak on the research methodology especially in data collecting technique where it only relied on the interviews, therefore, the next researchers are suggested to conduct more techniques to strengthen the collected evidences.

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