



Socio-Cultural Aspects of Teaching Foreign Languages in The Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University of Jakarta

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Info Articles

History Articles:

Received 23 February 2018

Approved 11 March 2018

Published 1 April 2018

Keywords:

foreign language learning;

foreign language textbook;

socio-cultural aspects

Abstract

This study aims to identify the social and cultural aspects in the French and German textbooks. It stands to reason that learning a foreign language inevitably involves socio-cultural aspects as language does not stand alone but must be related to the context. When teachers teach foreign language at the same time they also introduce its socio-cultural aspects. In consequence, textbooks should contain all the socio-cultural aspects of the language to be learnt. CECRL, a theory derived from Didier, is employed to determine the socio-cultural aspects in the French and German textbooks. There are seven aspects of socio-cultural by Didier but the writers will only use six aspects, they are: *La vie quotidienne, Les conditions de vie, les relations interpersonnelles, valeurs, croyances, et comportements, savoir-vivre, comportements rituels*. The analysis of two textbooks show that the textbooks contain six aspects of socio-cultural having daily lives as the most dominant.

How to Cite

Ekowati, S. H., & P., I. K. (2018). Socio-Cultural Aspects of Teaching Foreign Languages in The Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University of Jakarta. *International Journal of Active Learning*, 3(1).

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INTRODUCTION

Teaching a foreign language is certainly not the same as teaching Indonesian to the Indonesia. In foreign language teaching, teachers would have to explain at least two things: the aspects of the language itself and the socio-cultural aspects. Aspects of language consist of phonetic, phonological, and lexical.

Socio-cultural aspects are attached to the target language since language and socio-cultural aspects are inseparable.

The discussion of socio-cultural aspects means everything that is related to the social aspect, which includes among others: the setting for communication, the purpose of having a communication, the participants of the communication, and the topic of conversation/communication. Aspects of culture including among others: cultural objects in the form of artifacts, body gestures (kinesthetic), physical distance when a person communicates, eye contact when communicating and so on. Given these things then the teaching of foreign languages is not only focused on the elements of language but should also include the elements of socio-cultural of the language being learnt.

It is necessary for a language learner to comprehend the variety of socio-cultural aspects, since he or she will evidently meet or speak with the first language speaker. If learners only proficient in the aspect of language and not in the aspect of socio-cultural, it will create misunderstanding that leads to communication gap. Surely, this is detrimental to both sides.

This study is based on the idea that learning a foreign language is intended to have a communicative competence that is able to speak or communicate orally and in writing correctly. Experts argue that communicative competence is not only associated with grammaticality of a sentence or speech but definitely is broader than that.

Tagliante (1994: 35-36) states that communicative competence consists of 4 components: la composante linguistique, la composante sociolinguistique, la composante discursive ou énonciative dan la composante stratégique. The following is the brief description.

Composante la linguistique consists of four language skills: the ability to understand spoken and written texts and speaking and writing skills including the understanding of the lexical elements, the rules of morphology, syntax, grammar and phonology.

La composante sociolinguistique is the ability to use the language learned in accordance with the situation including rules covering the social, age, gender, setting of communication. Or in simple expressions, when we speak or write, we must remember who are we talking to, where, under what circumstances, and when the situation so as to influence the choice of vocabulary and grammar used.

La composante discursive relates to speech acts. We need to understand the speaker's intention whether to instruct, ask, being sarcastic, and so on. *La composante stratégique* is verbal and non-verbal strategy used when the speaker is uttering something. It need to be understood by the foreign language learner.

Such understanding of verbal and non-verbal in learning foreign language will improve learner's communicative competences. However, has this understanding appeared in classroom context? Has it reached expectation? Are the textbooks used already fulfilled the requirements to equip learners with communicative competences? Are the textbooks used already contained socio-cultural aspects? As we all familiar that textbooks play pertinent role in the process of teaching and learning in classroom.

Study by Mustakin from Language Centre on The Role of Socio-Cultural Aspects in the Teaching of BIPA showed that not all textbooks / materials for BIPA are presenting the material or information about the socio-cultural aspects of Indonesian. Out of 43 BIPA textbooks observed, only 24 textbooks that are featuring material about the socio-cultural aspects of Indonesian, whilst the rest are not. (www.ialf.edu/kipbipa/papers/mustakim.doc accessed on October 12, 2016).

Previous study on socio-cultural aspects was also conducted by Suci Mahardikawati from Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. Her study was on *Socio-Cultural Aspects in Folklore of Ki Ageng Balak's Tomb and its Functions For Mertan Villagers, District Bendosari, Sukoharjo: Review on Literary Reception*

and its Implementation as a Material for Teaching Indonesian Literature in High School, concluded that the implementation of Ki Ageng Balak folklore as a teaching material to teach literature was relevant and appropriate. (www.eprints.ums.ac.id/33235/i/artikel/i%20Publikasi.pdf accessed on October 12, 2016).

The results of these studies illustrate that textbooks should present complete socio-cultural aspects. This thought on the importance of socio-cultural aspect in textbook intrigues the writers to analyze the socio-cultural aspects in *Alter Ego 1* and *Studio d.A1* textbooks.

This study aims to analyze the socio-cultural aspects in textbooks used by freshmen in French and German study programs.

The results of this study are expected to provide information about the textbook used in the French and German study programs. If the textbooks are considered suitable and or appropriate then students can use them but if it turns out that these textbooks are not appropriate then further analysis should be conducted by study program to find other textbooks.

Someone learns foreign language with a purpose. Every individual has a different purpose. If someone wants to be a translator he/she needs to understand the meaning of foreign language and then translate it into his/her mother tongue. He/she may not need to achieve advanced competence in speaking. If someone learns a foreign language for the purpose of being a tour guide, then it requires the ability to speak, to communicate with foreign tourists.

The students from French study program are prepared to be educators after they graduate. The aim is really lucid that students should have the ability to speak French orally and in writing at a level DELF B2, master French teaching methodologies, (see Academic Guideline).

The graduates from French study program should be able to communicate orally and in writing at the level of DELF B2, which means they must be able to communicate orally and in writing in accordance with the socio-cultural aspects of French. Currently foreign language teaching in Indonesia is already very advanced. Along with these advances, there are many institutions that hold the teaching of foreign languages. In State University of Jakarta, there are some foreign language study programs under the auspices of the Faculty of Languages and Arts. Foreign language study programs are English, French, German, Arabic, Japanese and Mandarin.

Those languages are considered as foreign languages in Indonesia, thus the acquisition of foreign language is acquired through learning. Learning is the acquisition of knowledge or mastery of a subject or a skill by learning, experiencing, or instructing (Brown, 2007: 8).

As Brown's opinion on learning, that learning can be described as a deliberate attempt to gain knowledge about something- in this case is foreign language- through learning, experiencing and instructing. Acquisition a foreign language is usually done in a formal way and is different from the acquisition of the mother tongue or first language that is derived naturally, obtained through family, from mother, father, sister, grandmother, grandparents, caregivers and others.

The following is a description how foreign languages in the Faculty of Languages and Arts are conducted. This description is listed in Academic Guideline. Learning outcomes of French study program in 2014 are:

- a. Applying/using French by utilizing science and technology to solve problems and adapting to the situation as professional educators, teachers and researchers of French.
- b. Solving the problem of learning and teaching of French by referring to the apt theories, concepts, designs and models of learning French.
- c. Mastering theories, approaches, concepts, principles of language and language learning and applying them in the teaching and learning of French.
- d. Mastering some theoretical concepts on French literature, culture, translation and specific French (FOS).
- e. Finding the right solution to solve the problems of teaching and learning French.
- f. Designing learning materials in accordance with the needs of teaching and learning and applying them with full responsibility. (BPA 2014: 241).

Hence, the learning outcome of German study program as stipulated in BPA 2014 (Academic Guideline) are: 1). the graduates from German study program are able to communicate orally and in writing equivalent to B2 in general and in the field of offices and tourism; 2) graduates are also able to plan, manage and evaluate German learning equivalent to B1 level and able to conduct research in teaching and learning; 3) graduates are able to understand concepts of tourism and to explain domestic tourist attraction, able to organize travel and are able to offer domestic travel, (BPA 2014: 255).

Perceiving from both study programs learning outcomes, no significant differences appear. Both produce graduates who have the ability of language level as B2 of CECR. Graduates are also expected to master French/German, tourism and offices and most importantly both study programs prepare the graduates to be educators of French and German.

To achieve these goals, study program should prepare qualified teachers to master the language to be taught and mastering foreign language teaching methods. Infrastructures should be prepared in the form of adequate classroom and language laboratory, adequate media of learning and textbooks and so on. The following section will discuss the textbooks currently used in French and German study programs.

Textbooks currently used in French study program is *Alter Ego*. *Alter Ego* can be translated into Indonesian as the *tangan kanan*. This phrase means that people can be trusted to gain a success. In French, *Alter Ego* is having similar meaning that is to help learners to gain success in French both orally and in writing.

Freshmen use *Alter Ego 1* textbook. The book is written by team which some of its members have often written French textbooks for foreigners (FLE). The authors of the book are Annie Berthet, Catherine Hugo, Véronique M. Kizirian, Beatrix Sampsonis and Monique Weandendries. They are teaching French at the Alliance Française in Paris.

The textbook series are *Alter Ego 1*, *Alter Ego 2*, *Alter Ego 3* and *Alter Ego 4*. Each series is written by different people. This study will analyze *Alter Ego 1* for students of French study program published by Hachette Livre in Paris, France in 2006. *Alter Ego 1* is FLE textbook aims at adult learners and beginners. The learning outcome expected by using this textbook is students are able to master the French at the DELF A2 level.

Time allotted when learning on this textbook is 120 hours of instruction followed by assignments and evaluation. *Alter Ego 1* consists of 3 *leçon* divided into 9 *dossier*. By the end of the *dossier*, there is *Carnet de Voyage* which contains information about the culture of each initial dossier; there is a sheet *fenêtre sur* on material to be covered. At the end of the textbook, there is *Alter Ego 1* sheet named *Horizon* containing intercultural knowledge. *Alter Ego 1* comes with a CD, a workbook for students and teachers book.

Studio D is a textbook used by German study program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University of Jakarta since the academic year 2008/2009. The textbook is written by Hermann Funk, Christina Kuhn, Silke Demme and friends. The textbook is published by Katalis Publisher, Jakarta with license from the Cornelsen publisher, Germany. This indicates that the textbook has many users in Indonesia.

Studio D textbook is oriented at *Gemeinsamen europäischen Referenzrahmen* standard at the level of A1-B1 that delivers learner on a basic level test *Zertifikat Deutsch*. *Studio D* consists of: 1. Textbooks and workbook (*Kurs- und Übungsbuch*). 2. Workbook for proficiency (*Sprachtraining*). 3. Audio-CD for learners. 4. Handbook of vocabularies 2 *Studio D (Vokabeltaschenbuch)*. 5. Handbook for teachers (*Unterrichtsvorbereitung*). *Studio D* textbook package is consisting of *Studio d A1*, *Studio d A2* and *Studio d B1* assigned for the semester 1, semester 2 and semester 3 students of German study program, State University of Jakarta.

1. The textbook and workbook (*Kurs- und Übungsbuch*) consists of 12 chapters with the theme of everyday life. At the end of each four chapters of discussion, there is a chapter called *Station*. This chapter is a discussion about the three previous chapters. As in every textbook and workbook there

are four stations: Station 1, Station 2, Station 3 and Station 4. At the end of textbook concludes with a page that contains the *Modelltest* test for language proficiency of the 12 themes that were discussed earlier. Exercises/tasks for listening, reading, writing and speaking (*Hören, lesen, Schreiben and Sprechen*) are set in accordance with the requirements contained in everyday life, used by native speakers of German.

2. Workbook of proficiency contains material for all the required proficiency, which can help learners to practice more intensive at home. For that matter, the textbook is also equipped with a CD-ROM.
3. Audio CD for learners. CD is also provided to practice listening skills, which can also improve the ability of learners to speak.
4. The handbook vocabulary (*Vokabeltaschenbuch*). This handbook contains new vocabulary words, which are presented in sequence.
5. Handbook for teachers (*Unterrichtsvorbereitung*). This handbook can be used by teachers in presenting the material contained in textbooks and workbook. The technique of presentation and additional knowledge that must be mastered by teachers, including an explanation of the social and cultural aspects of Germany, is also contained in this book.

According to Bourdier, textbook (*les manuels*) consists of three components: cognitive, pedagogical and ideology component, (Bourdier, 2007: 2). The cognitive component related to material or content of the textbook. Materials are things that will be delivered to the learners. It is usually organized in chapters or in French it is called *dossier* or *leçon*. A textbook can contain 10 or more chapters organized by the themes.

Pedagogical component is the teaching the methods, techniques and approaches adopted by the authors of the book. French textbook and German both are using actional approach that is communicative approach by supplying additional communicative tasks or *tâches communicatives*.

Ideological component is a component that illustrates a society. Through the textbook, the learners are able to recognize the ideology of a nation, as ideology is usually reflected in the textbook, though perhaps incomplete. The explanation shows that through the textbook, the author describes many things on the material itself, and how to deliver the material as well as the ideology espoused by the author. Thus, through textbooks, learners can find all information about a community / nation. Such information forms an impression about a culture.

In terms of the presentation of information about the socio-cultural aspects, the author of the textbook is not necessarily deliver direct and explicit aspects, but through the selection of texts in accordance with the theme. The texts are usually served well so sometimes the social and cultural aspects and ideology are implied. Since the text book comes with a CD, and even then there are socio-cultural aspects of language learning.

In the textbook there are a number of texts, images and photographs, all of which are usually chosen to introduce language that we learn and socio-cultural aspects as well. Therefore the media is really useful for learners to understand the language and the social aspects of its culture.

In this regard, the author of the textbook has thought ad selected texts containing socio-cultural aspects that are easily understood by the learners. In learning a foreign language, texts that contain elements of socio-culture are used to convey information to the learner's about certain conventions in communication.

This study requires qualitative method. Data are collected on socio-cultural aspects from the two textbooks. The data gathered are then analyzed by using table of analysis based on CECRL. There are 7 socio-cultural aspects of European society, namely: *La vie quotidienne, les conditions de vie, les relations interpersonnelles, valeurs, croyances, et comportements, langages de corps, savoir-vivre, comportements rituels*. (CECRL Didier: it 82-84).

La vie quotidienne or everyday life is related to food, drink, work schedule, daily activities, such as national holidays and so forth.

Les conditions de vie (living conditions) is related to the level of life, living conditions, social security, and so forth.

Les relations interpersonnelles (interpersonal relationships) in relation to the social structure of society, the relationship between social class, race relations, the relationship between the political groups, and so forth.

Valeurs, croyances, et comportement (values, beliefs, and behavior) is associated with the group socioprofessional, income, regional culture, institutions, and other so forth.

Langages de corps (body language) is associated with body movement, gestures, eye movements and so forth that are used when talking. *Savoir vivre* or life skills is in relation to the timeliness, giving gifts (gift), clothing, ways to say goodbye and so forth. The last aspect is *rituels comportement dans les domaines tels que la pratique religieuse et rites, naissances, mariage, mort etc*, which means behavior associated with religious practices, birth, marriage, death, and so forth.

Of the seven socio-cultural aspects, only six of which will be used to analyze the two textbooks in French and German. The analysis covers only written texts therefore body gestures related in speaking are not included.

This study uses qualitative descriptive method with content analysis. The object of the study is socio-cultural aspects found in *Alter Ego and Studio 1 d. A1* textbooks.

The instrument of this study is the research team equipped with tables based on the theory adopted. The data analysis technique used is the theory from Milles and Huberman with the following steps: data reduction, data presentation and conclusion.

The results of textbooks analysis showed that both the textbook: *Alter Ego 1 d and Studio A1* contain socio-cultural aspects and the most common is the aspect of daily life. This aspect often appears is probably because the author considers that it is really pertinent to be acknowledged by beginners.

From the standpoint of socio-cultural aspects, the textbooks *Alter Ego 1 and studio d A1* are really suitable for use. If viewed from the date of publication of the textbook *Alter Ego 1* published in 2006, was a bit old-fashioned and needs to be replaced with a textbook published in 2015 or 2016. While the textbook *Studio D A1* is still suitable for use as it is the eight printed version of the textbook published in 2016.

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