Naturalness and Iconicity in Language

Contributors

Jumanto et al

Naturalness and Iconicity in Language

Contributors

Jumanto et. al.

KOROS PRESS LIMITED

Naturalness and Iconicity in Language

Contributors: Jumanto et. al.

Naturalness and Iconicity in Language

List of Contributors

Jumanto
Faculty of Cultural Studies (FIB), Dian Nuswantoro University, Semarang, Indonesia

Pamela Perniss
Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre, Cognitive, Perceptual and Brain Sciences Research Department, Division of Psychology and Language Sciences, University College London, London, UK

Robin L. Thompson
Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre, Cognitive, Perceptual and Brain Sciences Research Department, Division of Psychology and Language Sciences, University College London, London, UK

Gabriella Vigliocco
Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre, Cognitive, Perceptual and Brain Sciences Research Department, Division of Psychology and Language Sciences, University College London, London, UK

Marie Coppola
Departments of Psychology and Linguistics, Language Creation Laboratory, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, USA

Diane Brentari
Department of Linguistics, Sign Language Laboratory, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA

Jeffrey S. Bowers
Department of Experimental Psychology, University of Bristol, Bristol,

David S. Schmidtke
Department of General Psychology and Neurocognitive, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Markus Conrad
Department of Cognitive Neuroscience and Psycholinguistics, Universidad de La Laguna, La Laguna, Spain
Cluster of Excellence "Languages of Emotion," Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Arthur M. Jacobs
Department of General Psychology and Neurocognitive, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany
Dahlem Institute for Neuroimaging of Emotion (DINE), Berlin, Germany
Department of Experimental and Neurocognitive Psychology, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany
Cluster of Excellence "Languages of Emotion," Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany
Dahlem Institute for Neuroimaging of Emotion (DINE), Berlin, Germany

Gwilym Lockwood
Neurobiology of Language Department, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen, Netherlands

Mark Dingemanse
Language and Cognition Department, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen, Netherlands

Arash Aryani
Department of Experimental and Neurocognitive Psychology, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany
Cluster of Excellence "Languages of Emotion," Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Preface

Iconicity and naturalness remain controversial concepts in recent linguistic research. The text *Naturalness and Iconicity in Language* aims to scrutinize unresolved issues of iconicity and naturalness in language. It discusses topics such as naturalism in the philosophy of language and the epistemology of linguistics, linguistic iconicity in semiotics, iconic structures in sign languages, natural and unnatural sound patterns, and the iconic nature of parts of speech. A probability in language use towards a character language has been discussed in first chapter. In second chapter, we review the different types of iconic mappings that characterize languages in both modalities, including the predominantly visually iconic mappings found in signed languages. Third chapter represents the first study of phonological and morphosyntactic development in the use of handshape over time in a homesigner of any age who has yet to be immersed in a sign language environment. In fourth chapter, we consider a situation in which structural features of a language may discourage specific thoughts. Fifth chapter aims at illustrating the amount of findings obtained so far and to organize and evaluate different lines of research dedicated to the issue of phonological iconicity. In sixth chapter, we use the term sound-symbolism to refer to iconicity in spoken language. A corpus-based approach to phonological iconicity has been introduced in last chapter.

Contents

Chapter 1

TOWARDS A CHARACTER LANGUAGE: A PROBABILITY IN LANGUAGE USE

Jumanto

Faculty of Cultural Studies (FIB), Dian Nuswantoro University, Semarang, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This opinion paper is about a probability in language use, about how a competent speaker should be aware of speaking for politeness or for camaraderie, and be capable of avoiding impoliteness. The main aspects of pragmatics are briefly introduced and then elaborated as building-blocks of character language. The proposed building blocks are: 1) elaboration of meaning and form strategies, 2) distant language and close language strategies, 3) politeness and camaraderie strategies, 4) object language and metalanguage strategies. A view on character language in Indonesian context is given, on how politeness, camaraderie, and impoliteness are elaborated; and then, six phases of character language building are proposed as a verbal social project: 1) interaction phase, 2) teaching-and-learning process phase, 3) evaluation phase, 4) re-evaluation phase, 5) verification phase, 6) selection phase. Upon the completion of a character language building, a competent speaker is presumably well-equipped for using language in a particular situation that may call.

INTRODUCTION

I am not very sure whether this idea works or not, despite my preference or earnest hope on the former to the latter. Rather than standing idle imagining what I have been thinking about for years upon completion of my PhD in Linguistics (Pragmatics) from University of Indonesia (Jumanto, 2006), (Jumanto, Phatic Communication among English Native Speakers, 2008), and after considering the article in an international journal (Jumanto, Phatic Communication: How English Native Speakers Create Ties of Union, 2014), this writing of article has recently come into being. I have been thinking about the development of linguistics so far, and a thought has tempted me whether this thesis can affect the linguistic world we live in or not, whether what I am heading for is indeed there in a speech society or not, and whether what I have in mind is true or not. However, as I once presented this topic in an international conference on English Language Teaching(ELT) in 2011[1], and, in the following year, in an international BIPA (Indonesian for Non-Native Speakers) Conference in 2012[2], both held in distinguished private universities in Indonesia, I found out that, not unexpectedly, because people kept talking about how character students should be in the language teaching and character building in the 2011 conference, and because people talked more about Indonesian language teaching (BIPA) in the 2012 conference—both missed the talk about language with character—this raw concept of thesis did not find its path.

I have myself observed that the development of linguistics has been quite a bitter quarrel between formal linguistics and functional linguistics. I see that it is of no problem, just like two siblings have different opinions for the betterment of their home. Something missing was together searched on by the two siblings. The search on meaning has its long history, side by side with that on form. The search on form, in my observation, has developed the so-called formal linguistics; and on the other hand, the search on meaning has contributed to the development of functional linguistics. Though the search on meaning has long been done since de Saussure (de Saussure, 1916) and Peirce (Peirce, 1940) in the early 1900, Bühler (Bühler, 1918), Malinowski (Malinowski, 1923), and Morris (Morris, 1946) and Jakobson (Jakobson, 1960), it has been interrupted by the search of form since Bloomfield (Boomfield, 1930), Fries (Fries, 1979),

and Chomsky (Chomsky, 1950). The search on meaning was then revived by Austin with his speech acts theory (Austin, 1957), and then advocated by Searle (Searle, 1965), i.e. pragmatics, a branch of functional linguistics we can enjoy learning today. This cultural perspective on language use has been elaborated by functional linguists, e.g. Halliday (Halliday, Language as Social Semiotic, 1978), Lincoln and Guba (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), Holmes (Holmes, 1992), Thompson (Thompson, 1997), and Hinkel (Hinkel, 1999), to mention a few.

I have been long interested in the fact that our linguistic founding fathers have developed linguistics functionally, i.e. how they blended or combined linguistics and some other discipline into what we have heard or followed or advocated today, i.e. sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, or some other branch with the—linguistics suffix. Here, the meaning carried out by a particular form or text is elaborated into or is made to function in a particular discipline. Thus, sociolinguistics has been a blend of sociology and linguistics, psycholinguistics of psychology and linguistics, neurolinguistics of neurology (medicine) and linguistics, and some other blend of a particular discipline and linguistics.

In this very sense, I have been aware of the fact that speakers are indeed bound to context, one property of which is when we are speaking to a close hearer or a notclose hearer. Types of hearer then come into effect due to this sense. Brown and Gilmanhave elaborated this thesis with their grand article The pronouns of power and solidarity (Brown & Gilman, 1968). I myself have made a little benefit of their findings when researching Phatic communication among English native speakers (Jumanto, 2006), on how it functions differently to different types of hearer and on what types of form the English native speakers elaborated to show politeness or friendship.

Politeness and friendship (or better: camaraderie) have become a central issue in what has tempted me for years, whether language use is to hearers with power factor or whether it is to hearers with solidarity factor. This far, we have come to the so-called distant language or close language (Jumanto, Teaching a Character BIPA (Indonesian for Non-Native Speakers), 2012). Distant language brings politeness, and close language brings camaraderie. This is, then, leading to what I am now proposing to the world as character

language, the proposal of which is probably lacking advocation, but is hopefully getting a little attention.

In this article, we are talking about character language, or about politeness and camaraderie in language use, or about politeness or impoliteness in language use, i.e. about a probability in language use. Language use is, we believe together, a matter of probability, advocating the properties of language use, or communicative competence, first introduced by Hymes in the late 1960s (Hymes, On communicative competence, 1972); (Duranti, 1998). Meanwhile, the text analysis here employs Indonesian language corpus data, the researcher's opinion of which is based on three academic facts: 1) that the researcher is an Indonesian native speaker, 2) that the data collection as well as the direct observation is more authentic around the researcher's daily Indonesian-speaking atmosphere, and 3) that languages, commonly believed by formal as well as functional linguists, are most probably universal around the world.

CHARACTER LANGUAGE

A character language is a language with a character. The word character, in one sense, refers to nature, quality, of a thing (OLPD, 1987) or to ability, qualities, validity (CALD, 2008). A character language thus is able to function as a means of communication (ability), has qualities with which the language is different from the others (quality), and is effective in a correct formality (validity).

A character language should function as a means of communication, i.e. human communication, interpersonal and social. In an interpersonal communication, a character language should consider the speakers, the values and idiosyncrasies they believe in and hold, and their background knowledge as well. This is an interpersonal context. A character language should also involve the social values and norms, and other social aspects the speakers may elaborate in their verbal interactions. This is a social context. Thus, to be able to function as a means of communication, a character language should consider the interpersonal context and the social context of the speakers involved in verbal interactions. This is the first content: ability.

The second content of a character language is qualities. Qualities in this case may refer to everything special which distinguishes a

particular language from the others. Thus, a language with a character is then a language distinguishable from the other languages. In this sense, a character language is unique despite some universal aspects of languages in the world. Here, we can say that a character language has an identity.

The third content of a character language is validity. Validity in this case may refer to effectiveness in a correct formality (CALD, 2008). Formality refers to high or strict attention to rules, forms, and convention we hold and believe in together in society. Informality then does the reverse. In this light, a character language should have formal forms and informal forms. Formal forms are high forms (or of high variety) and informal forms are low forms (or of low variety).

High and low varieties of language exist in some speech society, as they meet the demands of verbal interacttions of the members. Here, we are speaking of a diglossic situation. A diglossic situation in a speech society is a situation where people usually speak two varieties or variants of their language, i.e. high language and low language, or for more ease to say, formal language and informal language.

From the accounts above, we can finally sum up here that a character language is a language which can function as a means of communication in a diglossic situation, i.e. either in formal situations or in informal situations.

Is English a character language? Is Indonesian a character language? Is your language a character language? What is a character language to do with pragmatics? What is pragmatics to do with a character language? How do we build a character language through pragmatics? These are questions to deal with in this opinion paper.

PRAGMATIC VIEW ON CHARACTER LANGUAGE

To begin with, let us talk about some significant pragmatic aspects here, i.e. interaction of meanings, form in pragmatics, distant language and close language, politeness and camaraderie, and object language and metalanguage. The aspects are to be discussed in the accounts below.

Pragmatics and Interaction of Meanings

Pragmatic linguistics or linguistic pragmatics or, for short, pragmatics is not merely talking about locution, illocution, or perlocution. It inevitably is. A speech is an act with the three meanings, i.e. locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary meanings. In pragmatics, this each meaning can be a force, an illocutionary or a pragmatic force. We are speaking and doing something at the same time, or to be more pragmatically specific: we do the act of saying something, implying something, and affecting someone at the same time. In the context that a speaker is talking to a cold wall or even a beautiful statue, or is speaking alone (soliloquy), we miss the perlocution. This is what Austin has elaborated in his grand theory of speech acts How to Do Things with Words (Austin, 1957). Austin's elaboration of speech acts theory is, in the writer's opinion, in line with Malinowski's argument that language is a mode of action (Malinowski, 1923).

Pragmatics is of human interactions every day (pragmeme = a human act (Mey, 2001)). Pragmatics is about interaction of meanings (Thomas, 1996); (Jumanto, Pragmatics: Linguistic World is Broad, 2011b). Though the search of meaning has long been done since de Saussure and Peirce in the early 1900, Bühler (Bühler, 1918), Malinowski (Malinowski, 1923), and Morris (Morris, 1946), it has been interrupted by the search of form since Bloomfield (Boomfield, 1930), Fries (Fries, 1979), and Chomsky (Chomsky, 1950). The search of meaning was then revived by Austin with his speech acts theory (Austin, 1957), and then advocated by Searle (Searle, 1965).

Pragmatics is the study of language use within context. Language use or spoken/written communication is a discourse (Richards, Platt, & Platt, Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, 1985); (Mey, 2001); (CoBuild CoBuild English Dictionary, 2003); (Jumanto, Discourse Analysis and Ideology Critics, 2011a). Utterances are the concrete forms of language use which we analyze as text (Carter, 1997). The analysis of pragmatics is then basically a discourse analysis on text within context (Cook, 1989); (Schiffrin, 1994); (Mey, 2001); (Jumanto, Pragmatics: Linguistic World is Broad, 2011b). Pragmatics is thus the study of meaning of language use in communication between the speaker and the hearer, within context, i.e. linguistic context and context of situation, in a particular speech society (Jumanto, Pragmatics: Linguistic World is Broad, 2011b).

Pragmatics regards communication as interaction of meanings, not interaction of forms. However, form or text is important as the vehicle of meaning. Without the form or text, language use or communication or discourse never happens, as there is nothing to be perceived or there is no text (Jumanto, Pragmatics: Linguistic World is Broad, 2011b).

The meaning (explicature or implicature) interacted in pragmatics is later developing or is open to probable elaboration by the speaker into the so-called ideology and then the myth. Here, the vehicles of meaning are not only an utterance or a speech act (or an idio text), but also an ideo text (a text bearing an ideology of a particular societal group or a political party) and a socio text (a text bearing an ideology of a particular society) (Jumanto, Language of Advertising: An Ideology Critic, 2010); (Jumanto, Discourse Analysis and Ideology Critics, 2011a).

How does pragmatics deal with form to find out meaning, as the form is the vehicle of meaning? To come to this answer, let us observe the account below.

Form in Pragmatics

Forms of utterance in pragmatics can be observed in three dichotomy types: 1) formal-informal, 2) direct-indirect, and 3) literal-non literal (Jumanto, Pragmatics and Character Language Building, 2011c). The word "formality" refers to high or strict attention to rules, forms, and convention (Hornby, 1987), and, therefore, informality does the reverse. Formal utterances have more complete, longer forms, and are in a good order. Informal utterances have incomplete, shorter forms, and are not in a good order, and sometimes cut-down, reversed-up, and changed in favor of the speaker.

Direct utterances are the utterances whose meanings can be soon interpreted directly from parts of the utterances, i.e. the meanings based on linguistic context (cohesive meanings). This meaning is called explicature in pragmatics. The opposite of this is called implicature. Implicatures are the meanings of indirect utterances, i.e. the meanings based on context of situation (coherent meanings). To come to an implicature of an indirect utterance, a hearer usually thinks a bit longer than he does to an explicature of a direct utterance.

Similar to direct and indirect utterances are literal and non-literal utterances. Literal utterances are the utterances in their usual and obvious sense. The opposite is non-literal or figurative utterances. Non-literal utterances use allegories and metaphors. Allegories are stories, paintings, or descriptions of ideas such as anger, patience, purity, and truth by symbols of persons with those characters. Metaphors are imaginative ways to describe something by referring to something else with the similar characteristics or qualities. A metaphoric language is thus the language with no usual or literal meaning but the language which describes something by images or symbols. Direct and literal utterances include banter, while indirect and non-literal utterances involve irony and hedges (Leech, 1983); (Jumanto, Pragmatics and Character Language Building, 2011c).

How do forms of utterance affect the meanings in pragmatics? Let us talk about distant language and close language in the next account.

Distant Language and Close Language

Distant language and close language here refer to and derive from the notion social distance. Social distance is the physical as well as psychological distance between the speaker and the hearer (Jumanto, Pragmatics: Linguistic World is Broad, 2011b). Social distance is not distant or close. It is a flexible concept of relative relationship between the speakers. Social distance is assumed to be zero when the speaker is talking to themselves[3].

From this context, pragmatics regards a diglossic situation of a speech society as having two variants of language, i.e. distant language and close language. Distant language refers to formal, indirect, and non-literal utterances, while close language refers to informal, direct, and literal utterances. As referring to formal, indirect, and non-literal utterances, distant language is usually carefully elaborated and uses safe and common topics. Meanwhile, as referring to informal, direct, and literal utterances, close language usually involves contractions, slangs, reverse-ups, changes, taboos, swearing, f-words, and uses any topics, personal and private (Axtell, 1995). The speaker tends to use distant language to the hearers with power factor (superiors); on the other hand, the speaker tends to use close language to the hearers with solidarity factor (close hearers)[4].

What are distant language and close language to do with politeness? Please watch our manners and read the following account carefully.

Politeness and Camaraderie

Considering the summary critique of politeness theories by Gino Eelen (Eelen, 2001), and apart from various theories of politeness (Leech, 1983; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Spencer-Oatey, 1992; Lakoff, 1990; Fraser & Nolen, 1981; Gu, 1990; Ide, 1989; Blum-Kulka, 1992; Arndt & Janney, 1985; Watts, 1989; Thomas, 1996; Coupland, 2000) Jumanto is trying to define what politeness is (Jumanto, Pragmatics: Linguistic World is Broad, 2011b). Jumanto proposed a theory of politeness among Javanese speakers, advocating the theory of Gunarwan (Gunarwan, Implicatures of Linguistic Codes Selection in some dialogues of Ludruk, 2001). Many of the politeness theories above are the results of violating Grice's Cooperative Principles (Grice, 1975), though some proposed a new atmosphere. However, few have proposed a working definition of politeness. Jumanto tried to offer a definition that politeness is everything good that has been uttered as well as acted by the speaker to the hearer within a particular context, to maintain their interpersonal face as well as their social face (Jumanto, Pragmatics: Linguistic World is Broad, 2011b).

The notion of face in politeness has come into high attention and importance since it was borrowed by Brown and Levinson (Brown & Levinson, 1987) from Goffman (Goffman, 1959, 1967). In Goffman's grand theory, everyone in interaction has two faces, positive face and negative face. Face refers to the will, intention, and other associations of ideas and values in the self of the speaker. In short, positive face refers to appreciation of the speaker's self and negative face refers to no depreciation of the speaker's self. The elaboration of face by Brown and Levinson has resulted in face management for two major politeness strategies, positive politeness strategies (which refer to positive face) and negative politeness strategies (which refer to negative face).

Under the light of this face management theory, Jumanto (Jumanto, Pragmatics and Character Language Building, 2011c) argues that the politeness theories in verbal interactions fall into or lead to two