

Context in Discourse Analysis of Indonesian Colonial Texts



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ABSTRACT: Discourses are defined as ideas conveyed by humans through language using a series of sentences in a co-text and context. Co-text is the cohesive and coherent relationship between a series of written words, phrases, sentences, in a paragraph. Generally, the contexts are understood more broadly even beyond the boundaries of language, therefore, it is considered non-linguistic. It is also the circumstances behind an idea used as a reference for understanding language expression. In colonial discourse, ideas are conveyed through narrative texts which express the real situation and time of the existing reality. Similarly, the use of discourse markers in the form of words, phrases, or sentences also represents the condition of the real context that is socio-historical and socio-cultural. This article, therefore, discusses the concept of context in texts with the application of colonial discourse projected from Indies Literary.

KEYWORDS: colonial discourse, Indies literary, power, socio-cultural context, socio-historical context

1. INTRODUCTION

The meaning of the idea is conveyed through a series of sentences in a co-text and context (Van Dijk, 1997; Halliday, 1978; Leitch, and Palmer, 2010). Co-text is defined as a sequence of words that are relevant to each other and composed cohesively in order to support the idea being conveyed, rather than incoherent sentences with different meanings. It is also viewed as a linguistic context or as an internal reference in a text. According to the research conducted by Lichao Song (2010), co-text refers to the context of discourse, namely the relationship between words, phrases, sentences, in a paragraph. However, context is generally understood beyond the boundaries of language. Therefore it is considered non-linguistic. Context is also defined as the circumstance underlying an idea used as a reference in order to understand the expression of language. It also deals within the participants' knowledge of a conversation (Stalnaker, 2014). The expression of an idea does not necessarily have to be conveyed in a complete sentence, because certain phrases and words are also viewed as expressions of language and indicate purposes used in a particular context (Widdowson, 2004).

Building ideas in a text requires a pattern, grouped according to the structuring model. The arrangement of ideas is conducted in several ways, such as narrative, descriptive, and explanative. Narrative usually involves describing and explaining facts that included to the pattern of structuring models at the complex level. Colonial texts often employ the narrative pattern of ideas (Latjuba, 2013), which includes the described facts. Colonial texts consist of properties such as participants, setting, time, and social situation such as events. The ideas conveyed through narrative texts are either imaginative and factual. In Indonesia, most authors admit that these texts contain factual contents. Therefore, several documented reports during the era of certain government policies such as *geschiedwerken*, contain historical facts and events. Similarly, novels or short stories of the Dutch East Indies written in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were regarded as realistic literary works because they cited real-world depictions. However, the imaginative element in the works, still dominate. Observers believed that the Indies literary tradition is not known the Romantic Philosophy in schools, unlike the European tradition of the 19th centuries (Latjuba, 2006). The Indies Literary of the 19th expressed more realistic realities. Due to the fact that the colonial texts express real life situations, the discourse also reflects the reality of time. The use of discourse markers in the form of words, phrases or sentences also represents real-life situation in socio-historical and cultural context. This research is aimed to present these situations from the perspective of the authors and discuss how they have constructed Indonesian society and culture.

2. CONTEXT IN DIFFERENT VIEWS

According to the philosophical view, context positively contributes to the lack of language, which serves as a tool for logical thinking and to describe the human condition (House, 2006). Wittgenstein (1958/1967) reported that language is the use of words, however it does not easily describe the world. This is in accordance with the philosophical view of Wittgenstein (1958/1967), which stated that language is a series of "games" in which framed "life forms."

Context in Discourse Analysis of Indonesian Colonial Texts

Chilton (in Blackledge, 2005) qualifies the term context with "backstage knowledge" which is essentially unlimited, and also determined through interest and presumption or reader's conviction. Stalnaker (in Camp, 2017) stated that the 'general knowledge of participants during a conversation, does not only revolve around information on the world. It also involves 'discourse itself', beliefs, goals, intentions and behaviors of the parties towards discourse.

According to Teun van Dijk (2004), discourse refers to the social situation in which a context occurs, and a mental representation of the model. The mental model is the interpretation of the discourse by individual language users which is generalized as general knowledge (Van Dijk in Ke Liu and Fang Guo, 2016). The theoretical idea developed by Van Dijk (2009) analyzes the subjective, mental and crucial role involved in the interaction, production and understanding of discourse. This idea is known as a context models, which are examined from a socio linguistic and cognitive perspective and are the missing link between discourse, communication situation and society. Meanwhile, according to Wodak and Meyer (2009) a socio-cognitive approach emphasizes on context and three interrelations between discourse, society, and cognition.

Context is important in verbal communication consisting of ideas, situations, events, or related information (Hueyan Hu, 2014). Halliday (1978), inspired by a research conducted by Malinowski (1923) and Firth (1935), stated that context is a text environment and a linguistic system. In literary texts, it is viewed as a special semantic system owned by words, phrases, and sentences (Latjuba, 2016). Meanwhile, Lichao Song (2010) reported that in linguistics, it is explored from three aspects, namely deictic, co-text, and collocation.

3. CONTEXT OF SOCIAL SITUATION IN COLONIAL TEXTS

Communicating a situation does not necessarily impact the discourse. House (2006) stated that only relevant communication situations, affect the cognitive process in the production and understanding of discourse. Therefore, context refers to the cognitive phenomena of speakers used in interpreting communication in order to have an effect on the discourse produced and the listeners understanding. Colonial texts which are narrative in nature, present context in two ways, namely by direct depiction or through symbols which indirectly influence the discourse to be conveyed.

For example, a short story written by Walraven in *Oriëntatie* (Van Zonneveld, 1988), the narrator describes the situation of the *soosje* room "Harmonie" which was abandoned after twenty years as explicitly stated in the text. During the colonial era, *Soosje* or *sociëteit*, was used as a place of entertainment for Dutch men. Subsequently, *soosje* "Harmonie" in Ngawi became a place of relaxation for Dutch officers. To enter *Soosje*, one needs to climb a few steps, and then take the stairs in the opposite direction to the ground floor, till it reaches the room at the narrow end. The room by the left is for theatrical performances, next to it is the dark room (*hok*) where artists get dressed. There's a large winged old piano in the theatrical performance hall, however three benches made of teak (*drie djatihouten zitjes*) which originated from the past was discovered in the next room (*zaal*). Along the wall were swivel chairs bought from Europe forty years ago, a *hoedenstandard*, a folding table, "folded" against the wall under the window. Carvings (*gravures*) and photographs (*portretten*) belonging to Koning Willem III, Koningin Emma when it was young were hung on the wall. On the other side of the wall hung Koningin's photo of 1920, a picture of Prinses Juliana's cheerful pastel as well as a large photo of general Soesoehoenan in uniform. There are still some ancient paintings, such as a painting entitled "*De Eerste Leugen*".

The context in the form of decoration inevitably affects the reader's understanding of the discourse narrated. This is due to the fact that the decision to display such decoration in a text was taken into consideration. The delineation of the context of situation that focuses attention on this decor clearly affects discourse, it is evident that the author implicitly symbolizes 'power', as represented by the paintings of powerful people. The reader's understanding of the discourse of power is further reinforced by the author's description of the "painting" entitled "*De Eerste Leugen*" (The First Lie), "a father's warning, a fisherman, that lifted his little daughter with his finger" (Walraven in Van Zonneveld, 1988). The reader's interpretation relates to the description of a father's warning to the daughter this shows a power discourse that exists in the household sphere. The power exists too in the State, which is shown by the photographs of the rulers (king, queen, princess, native king / Soesoehoenan, the supreme ruler in the army).

4. DATA AND METHOD

Discussing the context in these colonial texts is based on narratives conveyed by Dutch authors who had lived in the Dutch East Indies in the early twentieth century, in which their works dealt with the situation of the Dutch East Indies at that time. Several novels and short stories were used as primary data, as well as government report documents, all of which were written in Dutch. The available data sources in the form of novels and short stories are all private collections, republished series from *Indische Letterenreeks*. Secondary data is supporting data in the form of articles published in journals and books.

The method considered suitable for this research is contextual analysis which involves examining the historical, social, and cultural context in which a text is produced. This can help us better understand the meaning and significance of the text, as well as the perspectives and biases of the author. To conduct a contextual analysis of these colonial texts, we start by researching the socio-historical and cultural context of Indonesia during the colonial period. This might involve looking at factors such as: The social

Context in Discourse Analysis of Indonesian Colonial Texts

hierarchy and power dynamics between colonizers and colonized as expressed in the use of language; The political and economic conditions of Indonesia under colonial rule; The cultural and religious beliefs of both colonizers and colonized peoples.

5. DISCOURSE OF POWER IN COLONIAL TEXTS

In order to determine the core idea of discourse in colonial texts, it is necessary to recognize cognitive processes. The cognitive process is the author's personal experience obtained from observing the world, stored in memory, and then becomes an in-depth view of the individual. Repeated personal experiences will become habituated social actions, eventually becoming habits.

The social situations identified in colonial texts are linked by readers, associated with, and compared with other texts, from here it is believed that these colonial texts voiced a discourse of power. This concept of power has characteristics, such as the presence of actors (person, group, or entity); there are actions (which is bossy, cruel, greedy), on the other hand it gives rise to obedience, loyalty (from people who are controlled); a sense of superiority (while others are seen as inferior); existence of force support (such as military, science, wealth including control over land). (see figure 1).

According to Jorgensen and Phillips (2004) discourse is formed by ascertaining meaning partly around nodal points. A nodal point is a privileged sign around which other signs are arranged. These other signs derive their meaning from their relation to nodal points (see also Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:112).

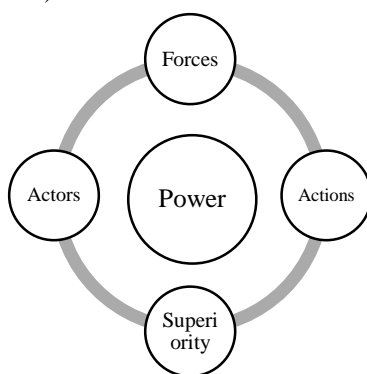


Figure 1. The concept of colonial power discourse, adapted from Laclau and Mouffe's concept of discourse

The author's personal experience reflected in colonial texts is a repeated social action, showing a picture of a social situation that is almost the same or even the same, actualized through the use of words, phrases or sentences that have the same meaning and lead to one point of purpose. This social situation displays two parties, the ruler and the controlled, who act and behave like two opposite poles. When describing himself, the author uses words, such as civilized, noble, intelligent, *deftig*, while "the other" is seen with condescension, contempt. Below is shown some of the words referred to in table 1.

Table 1: Language articulation of colonial texts

Ruler		Ruled	
Behavior	Articulation in the texts	Behavior	Articulation in the texts
<i>Bevelend</i>	<i>Hoog bevelend; besturen</i>	<i>Vertrouwd</i>	<i>Trouwen; vertrouwelijkheid</i>
<i>Wreed</i>	<i>Straffen, De straf van dwangarbeid</i>	<i>Gehoorzaam</i>	<i>Eerbidig; onderdanig; dienaar</i>
<i>Hebzuchtig</i>	<i>Geldzucht; machtzucht; gierigheid</i>	<i>Smeken</i>	<i>(...) twee Inlandsche bedienden neergehukt zaten.</i>
<i>Superieur</i>	<i>Westerse beschaving; geode opleiding</i>	<i>Stompt, dom, bot</i>	<i>Botte volk; Beminnelijke wilden</i>
<i>Aanzienlijk</i>	<i>Deftig; fatsoen; zindelijk</i>	<i>Vuil, slordig</i>	<i>Vuile jongen; stomme hond</i>

6. THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXTS OF COLONIAL TEXTS

Political and economic conditions

Life in the Netherlands was not prosperous during the first half of the 19th century, those moments were reflected in stories written in the correspondence between the people of Indies and their relatives in their home country. For example the life story of an indigent widow and the daughter that solely depended on the pension of the late husband. When the widow died the pension was stopped, while the daughter with no source of livelihood were forced to marry (Adinda, 1892).

Context in Discourse Analysis of Indonesian Colonial Texts

Financial difficulties, particularly due to lack of employment in the Netherlands at the time, caused many young people from disadvantaged families to migrate to the East. At the same time the Netherlands had just gained independence from France that occupied the land for nearly eighteen years (1795-1813). The country was almost bankrupt due to debts and expenses incurred during the war by Napoleon, the population was burdened with high taxes. In big cities such as Leiden, almost half of the population lived in a state of deprivation, the workers earned 200 guilders a year, they live in humid dwellings and fed on a potluck of bread and potatoes, while clothed in the gifts of the rich (Jansma en Schroor, 1987). This situation became complicated when the Indies colony was handed over to the British Empire, and this occurred when the Governor General of the Dutch East Indies moved from Daendels to Raffles (1811-1816).

In order to improve the economy of the declining country, the returning king Willem I together with *De Staten-Generaal* led the Netherlands after the departure of the French ruler. They attempted to stimulate trade by establishing the Dutch company NHM -*Nederlandsche Handel Maatschappij*- from 1824 to 1830 in the Indies. It also founded the institution of *Cultuurstelsel*, based on the suggestion of Van den Bosch (Jansma en Schroor, 1987). The *Cultuurstelsel* which in Indonesian is called the Cultivation System, requires one-fifth of the indigenous people's agricultural land to cultivate "government" products, such as coffee, sugar, indigo, and tobacco. The agricultural product is then purchased by NHM and exported to the Netherlands where these products are then auctioned to the Dutchman or foreigners. The NHM was at an advantage and also had the right to monopolize trade within the Indies. This led to a lot of protests by the Hollanders that lived in Indies, and their separation from the mother country.

Indies is indirectly a place to earn money to rebuild a slumping economy. It is not surprising that they were inundated by citizens seeking better livelihoods. The colonial government facilitated the provision of the *Department Van Justitie*, an agency that sorted the placement of newly arrived young men from Dutch to be deployed to various places in the archipelago (De Wit 1903). On the contrary, the Dutch girls that recently arrived in the Indies lived with the families of their elder brothers, cousins or acquaintances. They were among those that later worked as teachers (*onderwijzers*) and nannies for Dutch families who had lived in the Indies for a long time (Adinda, 1892).

Not only young people from disadvantaged families went to the Indies, some young people (*jongelui*) who had just finished their scholarship also migrated. They are interested in studying indology, and want to apply the science acquired in college in real life situations, to gain sufficient experience. Generally, they applied to be placed in rural areas, outside Batavia (Jakarta), and occupied positions such as *ambtenaar* at *Binnenlandse Bestuur* or in Indian law institutions as in *Landraad* (special court for indigenous) as prosecutors (De Wit, 1903).

There are also people that are assigned the special task of spreading religion (*zendingsarbeid*), one of which is Dr. Benjamin Frederik Matthes, incorporated in *Het Nederlandsch Bijbelgenootschap* (Dutch Evangelist Association), and stationed in South Sulawesi. Besides conducting the task of spreading religion, it also has a special interest in the language and literature of Bugis-Makassar. This is shown in the thirty-one years (1848-1879) of its spectacular works in Zuid Celebes, namely *Het Makassaarsche en Boegineesche Woordenboek*, *de Makassaarsche en Boegineesche Chrestomathien*, and *de Makassaarsche en Boegineesche Grammatica* (Van den Brink, 1943).

The life of Toewan Tanah in the 19th century

The immigrants in Indies are job seekers trying to acquire a better income compared to their income in their country. Jobs in the private sector such as working in plantation companies which cultivate crops for export namely coffee, tobacco, rubber, and sugarcane, requires skilled and creative personnel for further development. In the last decade of the 19th, private plantations grew rapidly. The Agrarian Law of 1870 was changed and the monopoly that was usually controlled by the present government became an open opportunity for private entrepreneurs.

Technological developments, such as the construction of railroads, seaports, and especially the opening of the Zues canal, made it easier for goods and people to move from Europe to Batavia, and vice versa. The journey currently lasts for 10 days. The trip at night is even more beautiful, because both the Zues Canal and the ships are equipped with electric lightings (Daum, 1895/1989). The Dutch farmers (*planters*) had a different sense of the Indonesian peasants at that time. These farmers were ordinary people in their home country, many were from poor families living in big cities in the Netherlands. They pitted fortunes in the colony due to the relationship with government officials in the Indies and hard work. They succeeded in communicating with the elites (*voornaamste kringen*). They became newly rich and formed a fairly moderate society, as planters. The income was huge, approximately 40 to 60 miles per year. This situation caused the farmers to view themselves as being equal with government officials (*hoofd bestuurambtenaar*) as well as the *residents* and their families (Van Bruggen, 1909). These wealthy farmers, bought new lands closed to the road and they became known as land owners (*toewan tanah*). Land tenure was considered the best during the Indies.

The indigenous farmers particularly those that planted rice were not as lucky as the Dutch, due to persistent debt problems, associated with borrowing from Arab usurer (*geldschietters*) at high interest rates and huge taxes to the Dutch East Indies Government. Some native peasants, lost their rice stock, because they bought from Chinese merchants, therefore, they hired buffalos to work on the fields (Van Bruggen, 1909).

Context in Discourse Analysis of Indonesian Colonial Texts

The relationship between the Dutch farmers (*planters*) that settled in Indies and the new arrivals, sometimes exhibited hidden competitive symptoms. The new arrivals (*totok*), gained farming education (*landbouwschool*) from the Netherlands, and were, therefore, perceived by the plantation practitioners as being arrogant due to the knowledge they possessed (Van Bruggen, 1909).

8. SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXTS OF COLONIAL TEXTS

The socio-cultural context describes social situations as societal habits accepted by a tradition. This socio-cultural context focuses more on peoples' attitude when facing life challenges. For example, the socio-cultural description of the following colonial texts.

Indies Marriage (Indisch Huwelijk)

The Colonial Government rules that young Dutch men in the Indies are prohibited from marrying (*trouwverbod*) till after the first six to ten years of service. They also have the right to leave (*verlof*) or to return to their country after that period. Some people used this opportunity to find the right Dutch girl (*zuivere Hollandsche meisje*) to marry, because there is a presumption among the people that marrying a fellow Dutch is less risky, particularly when the period of work in the Indies is over. Not all young people use this opportunity to search for a soul mate. Those that have fiancées in Holland, and unable to return conducts long distance marriage referred to as *handschoen getrouwd*. This means the girl marries the partner represented by a pair of gloves. It is only after the ceremony has ended that the bride is allowed to follow her husband to the Indies (Van Bruggen, 1921).

Marriage is prohibition for Dutch youths trained in the Indies as civilian officers, military personnel, or an assistant administrator of the plantation. This is because they are more concerned with their activities on the job. In addition to their relatively young age, their career is a starting point, therefore it is estimated that between six to ten years they tend to be established with a raise in income. However, despite these rules, in reality most of the youths are distorted and lonely bachelors (*vrijgezel*) in a country where they are surrounded and served as lords by the natives. They also use this opportunity to establish a special relationship with any privileged servant, without official marital ties, known as conjugal relations, or concubinage (Daum, 1892/1988) as long as the employer has a legitimate wife which is usually an European woman.

In the past, the relationship between employers and domestic servants occurred because of the customs of the European community which entails the submission of all personal affairs to the maid. Initially the job of the maid was to take care of all the daily needs of the employer, however, things got out of hand and extended into the employer's privacy. Therefore, many of the servants were stuck with the employers' sexual addiction.

Although slavery has been abolished since 1863, the relationship between employers and maids in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the Indies still reflects an unequal relation. This is because servants were perceived as slaves that needs to be possessed and treated as the employer desires. Those married to the master or have children from this relationship, are treated slightly different from the slaves. They called as *Nyai*'s. When the master has a male Dutch guest, the *nyai* resumes her place, at the side house (*bijgebouwen*) pavilion, or at the back porch (*achtergalerij*) of the main house. They only appears on the front porch (*voorgalerij*) when they need to serve food and drinks to the guests. In terms of appearance, the *nyai*, certainly looks different from the other maids. She appears in better clothes and shows a confident attitude than the people around, therefore the *nyai* has an attractive physical appearance, beautiful, and young.

Such relationships do not have equal rights. They are often threatened to returned to their hometown by the employer. Sometimes they are not even aware of what their mistakes, the most common reason, are because the employer's lover from Dutch decides to visit the Indies. Generally, *nyai*'s feel marginalized due to the arrival of a female Hollander, and in most cases they are sent home with little money and promised to be taken care of the children and their cost of living. However, some of these employers behave badly, such as offers their exes to others. There is usually a feeling of resentment towards the employer and their rival, the Dutch woman (prospective wife) and sometimes witchcraft is used to harm them (Daum, 1895/1987).

Mystical culture in the life of the Indies community

The Indies community find it difficult to handle life's problems. Their daily lives always involves actions that connects them with supernatural powers. Their helplessness, causes the people to rely on supernatural powers. These beliefs have an impact on their actions which are highlighted as having negative and detrimental effects on others.

People derive confidence in handling life problems from strength obtained from the unstable world. They believe that by worshipping supernatural powers through prayers, offerings or be indulging in actions such as invoking ancestral spirits tends to alleviate suffering or at least prevent disasters or misfortunes. This is actually a pre-historic belief, recorded in almost every culture.

The Dutchman in the 19th tried to understand mysticism, by seriously studying and posting the results under the title *De Nieuwe Mystiek*. Is H.M. van Nes (Bel, 1986). He scientifically studied and recorded people's interests on mystical things. According to Van Nes, mysticity is the entire effort to unite with the world beyond the reach of sensory abilities. The atmosphere is described as circumstances whereby people seem to be floating in air, breathing in a misty environment, temporarily driven by nobility, humility and tries to forget the world for a moment. Mysticism is perceived as a seemingly religious act. Van Nes also stated a number of new mystical schools, namely theosophy, Buddhism, spiritism, magic, and satanism. Although mystics have been acknowledged since classical times, some Western industrial societies in the 19th perceived these practices as acts that were contrary

Context in Discourse Analysis of Indonesian Colonial Texts

to rationality. They forced to think properly in order to stem the attacks of destructive mysticism that is often directed at the Westerners.

While Easterners believed in the use of supernatural powers perceived as mystical functions such as amulets to protect themselves from illness or self-destructive attacks by others and increase crop productivity (Van Zeggelen, 1909). Through rituals and offerings to the forces of nature, they expressed gratitude for the success of their harvest while expecting abundant crops in the future (Van den Brink, 1943). Mysticism is often used to hurt and inflict injuries on people, and this action is commonly referred as witchcraft (Daum, 1895/1987). In the Dutch East Indies novel, witchcraft is used in accordance with the term *stille kracht* 'hidden power' (Bel, 1988) and this is often used as a weapon to repay people that have unparalleled power. Mysticism is also defined as a belief in evil spirits, that usually live in haunted and scary places, such as in the cemeteries (De Wit, 1920) and banyan trees. Banyan trees are always in the town square, which is a sign that this is the center of government, which implies the center for crowds. People are usually careful when passing by, in order not to be disturbed by evil spirits guarding the tree, and they also act more friendly towards them, by offering sacrifices in the form of food and fruits.

9. CONCLUSION

Analysis of Indonesian colonial texts produced in the late 19th and early 20th centuries shows a discourse of power, as seen in the use of language. Based on the analysis and interpretation of the context of power discourse, it is found that contexts are fragments of social situations that are verbalized directly by the authors in the texts. Divided into contexts of socio-historical and socio-cultural situations. This social situation was a reflection of the actual situation that existed in society at that time, containing the values of inequality and social biases. It is a historical fact.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest

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Context in Discourse Analysis of Indonesian Colonial Texts

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