Bicultural Information Literacy:
Study on The Rewritten Texts by Students of The Department of German Language

Desti Nur Aeni

Postgraduate Programme at Universitas Negeri Surabaya (State University of Surabaya)

destiaini16070956002@mhs.unesa.ac.id

Abstract—This study aimed at revealing the significance of the implementation of Indonesian-German bicultural information literacy to foster positive values and attitudes towards learning the German language in university. The qualitative approach was used in this research because many specific and contextual cultural data were generated. The research subjects were the fourth-semester German Language Education students. The data were obtained from observation and the results of student performance. The data analysis highlighted a variety of important statements, sentences, or quotations providing an understanding of how the research subjects experienced a bicultural phenomenon that affected the information literacy in the texts they rewritten. The research findings showed that, regarding information literacy, students could explore the topic and identify new concepts to achieve certain goals. In terms of bicultural aspect, students were able to integrate the cultural aspects involved, by (1) identifying the foreign cultural identity (German) and comparing it with the culture of the readers (Indonesian); (2) presenting logical and objective perceptions in identifying the foreign cultural identity (German); and (3) explicating events, stories and incidents that present German culture and language.

Keywords – Information Literacy; Bicultural, Indonesia; Germany; Rewritten Text

I. INTRODUCTION

The term 'literacy' has expanded to have not only a broader definition but also various usages. Literacy no longer has just a single meaning, i.e. the ability to read and write but applies to more contexts, such as technological literacy, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy, media literacy, and others. In fact, the link between literacy and human beings cannot be separated from communication and language. The concept of literacy—with its complexity of meaning—continuously evolves, is interpreted and defined in various

ways and points of view. In the instructional process, communication focuses more on the concept of the integration of texts in print or other visual media (Sari et al., 2013). Instructional communication is effective if it is accompanied by a systematic strategy in stimulating someone to generate ideas in learning; thus the role of language and art of delivery is important.

The strategy aimed at determining and selecting learning content and other activities included in the literacy activities involves observing, digging and exploring, discussing, and presenting results (Suyono, 2007). Observation, exploration, discussions, and presentations are the acts which involve creativity, thinking abilities and language skills of a theme or topic, and the results of which are then communicated in written and spoken form as a result and an indicator of a

person's literacy level. However, learning about the language code for representative meaning is not sufficient for mastery of literacy, one should also explore a broader life. Knowledge of perspective, a way of life, and society and technology development affects how one can communicate.

Understanding the concept of literacy in classroom settings can be realised by the use of communicative approach and literary content (Kramsch & Nolden, 2016). The communicative approach is based on the view that language is a means of communication. Kramsch suggested reading activities applying the reader-response theory which emphasises that reading is an activity that involves creativity and productivity, not just literacy. Learners focus on the information gathered from reading and react to what is being read. Learners can be exposed to dialogic reading and create meaning. As a result, the practice of literacy in foreign language learning is dominated by information literacy theory and reader-response theory. The exploration of intertextuality gives foreign language learners a hint about where they should make changes according to their space in the framework of critical thinking and intercultural understanding. The outcome of this activity extends the meaning of 'literacy', covering multiple ways for learners to communicate and perform reading and writing activities as well as various types of materials or media for reading and writing activities. This implies how comprehensive the critical analysis that should be done to interpret texts.

Information literacy reflects several characteristics of expertise, such as recognising basic information rich in structures, meaningful patterns, contextual knowledge, and relevant points (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking, in Kerka 2000). These characteristics are developed through the search for answers to meaningful questions. This information seeking process depends on the underlying personal and cultural context. The expected competence of the information literacy concept allows learners to recognise the occurrence of information discrepancies, explore alternative strategies to reduce information discrepancies, select a strategy and do a follow-up, assess the effectiveness of the strategy, and store information for future use.

Another approach to literacy related to one's comprehension of a foreign language as part of the teaching and learning process can be further explained by the use of texts that are relevant and in a real-world context. The introduction to various forms of language processing and communication genres is referred to as the genre approach (Knapp, Peter & Watkins, 2005). A text has a particular genre and some texts have a high degree of relevance and authenticity, such as texts in print and electronic media. The text used in this paper was a short story entitled "Deutsche Kastanien" written by Pazarkaya (1979). It tells about Ender, a young German-born to Turkish parents, who assumes that there is nothing wrong with his national origin until one day his playmate, Stefan, refuses to play with him anymore on the grounds that he is not of German origin. This reminds him of the same incident a year earlier, when he is considered not a German citizen. His parents cannot explain this issue properly but only points out that he is a Turk born but brought up in Germany. This text was selected due to its internalisation of universal values that can be the basis of harmony in multiculturalism in the educational environment, which is still very much a subject of discussion in the field of humanities. Therefore, the story is highly relevant to intercultural learning.

Exploring the similarities and contrasts between two different cultures in intercultural learning provides new insights into learners' perspectives about the social, economic, cultural and political backgrounds of both countries. Grant argued that a bicultural programme can encourage learners to conserve their ethnic heritage and reinforce their self-concept; these enable teaching to be more efficient and effective (1996: 71). Self-concept that is individual assessment based on personal belief can be developed dynamically and evaluatively. Dynamically, one should be able to solve problems in learning activities. Evaluatively, one should be able to improve her/himself through observation of their activities.

Regarding the kind of texts, situations, or discourses an individual should acquire to behave and think accordingly according to Gee, a broader idea exists to address the use of language, behaviour, values, and beliefs (2008: 141). This is to give a different nuance to an experience. The ability to access and retrieve information from texts relates to how learners seek, select, and collect specific information precisely from a text,and then interprets what is being read.

In the instructional practice to date, learners of the German language have not had the opportunity as much as possible to be active and progressive in responding to all existing phenomena, such as instructional materials, comprehension strategies, and competencies to be developed. It is expected that through text and comprehension strategies, learners can develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes. In other words, they can not only improve language skills but also recognise necessary information and be able to find, evaluate, and use the information effectively. These sorts of competencies should be applied in learning German as a foreign language.

One concept that allows learners to make social change is that readers can "engage" in a dialogue with text and with other readers. This strategy illustrates and explains a discourse of how to read in opposition (Kramsch, 2016). Learners can be helped to identify specific sections within the text with their responses. In this study, the original text was rewritten using that strategy to create a new version with different perspectives. The new composition in the form of a rewritten text in German was expected to bring the uniqueness of fresh perspectives of Indonesian learners and foster cross-cultural understanding with critical and aesthetic awareness as the essence of literacy. Students as learners were given guidance on how they could expand the original text so that they could compose readable rewritten texts, as a good communication between the reader and the author should exist in the writings.

In general, the focus of research was to investigate the implementation of bicultural information literacy (Indonesian-German) performed by students in reproducing/rewriting a text. This study aimed at revealing the significance of the implementation of Indonesian-German bicultural information literacy to foster positive values and attitudes towards learning the German language in university.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The major contribution of the qualitative approach used in this paper was that it allowed very specific and contextual cultural data to be generated. It was especially effective in obtaining culturally accurate information about values, opinions, behaviours, and social contexts of particular rules. The research participants were the fourth-semester German Language Education students who had basic German language skills at B1 level.

In collecting the data, the researcher used the probing method. This method was employed to deepen in particular aspects that were not clear enough for the researcher. Data were obtained from observation and the results of student performance. Creswell stated that in

qualitative research, researchers collect their own data (2015: 60). Researchers may use instruments for gathering data but they should be the ones who genuinely collect information.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The texts rewritten by students indicate that the data included in the texts have complied with the criteria based on basic literacy, competence, and character. There written versions bring unique perspectives in their own way. This research did not focus on the linguistic structures of the rewritten text, but rather students' expressions and responses to the German texts they have read. Some of the data are shown below.

(1)   Data KS.1.1
         Deutsche Kastanien ist über der Rassismus. So Ender ist in Deutschland geboren, aber er ist Türke. Er hat keine schlechte Gefühl darüber, bis sein Freund, Stefan, sagt zu ihm, dass er kein Deutscher ist und er möchte nicht mehr mit ihm spielen.

Based on the basic literacy and information literacy competence, this writing shows that KS has been able to describe and mention the required information by exploring the common sources of information to get to know related topics better and deeper. Exploration was done by explaining further the meaning of "der Rassismus". The next sentence tells how Stefan does not want Ender as his playmate because Ender is not a German. In addition, KS has been able to identify certain concepts and terms, e.g. "der Rassismus" which means racism or prejudice and unequal treatment based upon national origin.

Within the framework of literacy skills, KS thought critically about the theme of the text, and then expressed it orally or in writing. It is a manifestation of one's efforts—namely KS—to control properly the surrounding circumstances through various processes by using information from the senses (Joyce et al., 2015) and other potentials. Also, the characteristics of expertise in information literacy can be seen in how KS recognised relevant basic information and contextual knowledge (Kerka, 2000).

(2)   Data KS.2.7
         Diese Situation kenne ich in meinem Umgebung. In Indonesien haben wir ja so viele verschiedene Kultur, aber nicht alle wissen, dass es wichtig ist. Es gibt noch Rassismus in Indonesien wie zum Beispiel über die Hautfarbe.

KS could integrate the cultural aspects involved especially in a bicultural manner by understanding the identity of other cultures and performing cultural comparisons. One cultural identity identified by KS can be seen in the sentence *"Diese Situation kenne ich in meinem Umgebung"*. The word *"kenne"* which means "to recognise" indicates the knowledge of another's cultural identity. Moreover, across-cultural comparison was made when KS compared German culture with the culture of Indonesia which is very diverse—e.g. the skin colour in each region in Indonesia. The variance in skin colour occurring within regions in Indonesia was logically perceived by KS to be a thing that could lead to racism. The statement was supported by the following KS.3.7 data which shows how KS analysed other cross-cultural aspects objectively.

(3)   Data KS.3.7
         Ich glaube, dass man wegen der Verschiedenheit die andere Respekt sein muss.

The data above shows that KS explored his way of thinking and reasoning, which is implicitly represented in Holmes's quote (in Setiadi, 2012), "Literacy by its nature is about what we do. It is about the purpose and the variety of these texts and the activities to which they give rise." His way of thinking and reasoning is in accordance with the dimension of human nature, i.e. intelecticum.

The integration of cultural aspects is also illustrated in the following data.

(4)   Data NA.1.7
         Ich möchte hier betonen, wie Ender sich fühlt, dass er nicht die gleichen Rechte hat, wie er sich von den anderen körperlich anders war, als er in Deutschland geboren und aufgewachsen ist. Es kann einen sehr realen Rassismus im Alltag genannt werden.

Regarding the introduction of the cultural and social context in the source text, NA realised that by describing the main idea extracted from the information collected. Also, the phrase *"Ich möchte hierbetonen"* which means "I want to emphasise here, ..." confirms that NA could explicate events, stories, and incidents that present German culture and language. In the clause "..., dass er nicht die gleichen Rechte hat, ...", NA voiced justice and democracy against the discrimination Ender experiences due to his nationality. Cultural background affects one's perspective on the world. Being exposed to Indonesia's diverse culture, NA could empathise with Ender's situation and see the world from the character's perspective. Samovar (2001: 286) stated that empathy is necessary in the study of the competence of interpersonal and intercultural communication. Through empathy one is placed imaginatively in another's cultural world different from his/hers and experiences what other cultures are like.

(5)   Data N.1.7
Wenn jemand anders ist, unterscheiden sich viele Menschen und sind spöttisch. Unterschiede können eine interessante Sache sein, weil wir nicht nur in der Lage sind, eine Person, deren Kultur anders als bei uns zu erkennen, aber wir können auch andere Menschen schätzen, vor allem Fremden.
Wenn wir an einem neuen Ort sind, können wir nur anders aussehen. Der Unterschied könnte unangenehm sein, wie intimidiert sein, wenn jemand von uns anders aussieht.

The above data is more complex in terms of content. N communicated the content of the text through subjective judgments. N identified keywords such as "sich unterscheiden" which means to distinguish and also "der Rassismus". These keywords are related to the premise of the main idea. There is an interesting feature of N's writing, that N compared new knowledge, i.e. the words "spöttisch" and "intimidiert sein" which means mocking and intimidating with prior knowledge of "sich unterscheiden". N pinpointed the added values, contradictions and other unique characteristics of information on a foreign culture. However, what remains to be highlighted is how N analysed the foreign cultural identity by referring to logical and objective perceptions.

(6)   Data WNA.1.7
"Du bist kein Deutscher, denn du sprichst nicht zu laut als Deutscher, du hast verschiedene Körperteile als Deutscher. Deutscher muss deutsche Name, blaue Augen, blonde Haare haben. Und du hast keine."

The excerpt of data WNA.1.7 has demonstrated a relocation of meaning. The information that is not mentioned in the source text is that a German has typical characteristics such as a German name and typical physical traits, i.e. blue eyes and blonde hair (Deutscher muss deutsche Name, blaue Augen, blonde Haare haben). WNA relocated meaning by including his own evaluation into the rewritten text. The evaluation in question is to include the physical characteristics of a German as in the data above. In other words, WNA understood a foreign cultural identity, namely German culture, by recognising typical physical characteristics. The relocation of meaning was referred to by Kramsch (in Bredella & Delanoy, 1996: 166) as part of learners' method to express themselves about to the story being read despite their language limitations.

The knowledge of WNA on one of the German cultures is in line with Bredella's statement (in Bechtel, 2003: 59-60) emphasising the selective, constructive and creative elements of human perception, and illustrating that perception is always influenced by the interaction between what is given and what is perceived, experiences and knowledge. The knowledge that is restricted within the sphere of culture significantly affects what and how one sees the world.

(7)   Data WNA.2.7
Es ist nicht falsch als Türke oder Deutscher werden, solange wir gute Haltung gegenüber anderen halten.

WNA tried to show his ability to explore the foreign culture and participate in it. By writing "es ist nicht falsch, ..." (it is not wrong to be a Turk or a German, ...), WNA expressed his empathy, had a perspective, and temporarily assimilated into an alien culture, and had an understanding of the foreign orientation system. WNA also linked the image of another culture (Germany) with the image of his own. This process concurs well with the perspective model proposed by Kramsch (in Bechtel, 2003: 70).

IV. CONCLUSION

The research findings have led the researcher to conclude that regarding information literacy, students could explore the topic and identify new concepts in an effort to achieve certain goals. In terms of bicultural aspect, students were able to integrate the cultural aspects involved, by (1) identifying the foreign cultural identity (German) and comparing it with the culture of the readers (Indonesian); (2) presenting logical and objective perceptions in identifying the foreign cultural identity (German); and (3) confronting events, stories and incidents that present German culture and language.

Judging from the rewritten texts, learners have demonstrated extraordinary ability to use several stylistic elements to create meaning despite their limited German proficiency. Reading the rewritten texts by Indonesian students allows teachers to recognise every potential meaning that has been created and how the students actualise it. Through students' rewritten texts, the Indonesian-German bicultural information literacy can be observed and generated.

After the text edit has been completed, the paper is ready for the template. Duplicate the template file by using the Save As command, and use the naming convention prescribed by your conference for the name of your paper. In this newly created file, highlight all of the contents and import your prepared text file. You are now ready to style your paper; use the scroll down window on the left of the MS Word Formatting toolbar.

References

[1] Bechtel, M. 2003. *Interkulturelles Lernen beim Fremdsprachenlernen im Tandem.* Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.

[2] Bredella, Lothar, dan Delanoy, Werner. 1996. *Challenges of Literary Texts in the Foreign Language Classroom.* Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.

[3] Creswell, John W. 2015. *Penelitian Kualitatif dan Desain Riset – Memilih Di antara Lima Pendekatan*. 3rd Edit. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.

[4] Gee, J. P. (2008). *Social Linguistics and Literacies* (Third Edit). New York: Routledge. Retrieved from http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.476.9477&rep=rep1&type=pdf

[5] Grant, S. R. (1996). Toward identity and community in Namibia and the United States: A disturbing contrast - ProQuest. *The Social Studies*, *87*(2), 4. Retrieved from http://e-resources.perpusnas.go.id:2071/docview/274764952/abstract/5222452B4A7349BAPQ/1?accountid=25704

[6] Joyce dan Weil. 2015. *Models of Teaching (Ninth Edition)*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.

[7] Kerka, Sandra. 2000. Extending Information Literacy in Electronic Environment dalam *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, no. 88, hal. 27-38.

[8] Knapp, Peter & Watkins, M. (2005). Genre, Text, Grammar: Technologies for Teaching and Assessing Writing - Peter Knapp, Megan Watkins - Google Books. Retrieved May 27, 2017, from https://books.google.co.id/books?id=6VP1slspP7oC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

[9] Kramsch, C., & Nolden, T. (2016). Redefining Literacy in a Foreign Language Linked references are available on JSTOR for this article : Redefining Literacy in a Foreign Language. *Die Unterrichtspraxis / Teaching German*, *27*(1), 28–35. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3531473

[10] Laksono, Kisyani. (2017, April). *Strategi Literasi Dalam Pembelajaran*. Seminar Nasional Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra II (Selasar II), Universitas Negeri Malang.

[11] Neuman, W. Lawrence. 1997. *Social Research Methods. Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches 3rd Ed*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

[12] Sari, Esti Swatika; Suryaman, Maman; Lestyarin, B. (2013). Model Multiliterasi dalam Perkuliahan Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia. *LITERA*, *12*(2), 246–255.

[13] Samovar, Larry A & Richard E. Porter. 2001. *Communicating Between Cultures. 4th Ed*. Belmont:Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

[14] Setiadi, Hari dkk. 2012. *Analisis Hasil Belajar Peserta Didik dalam Literasi Membaca melalui Studi Internasional PIRLS 2011*. Jakarta: Pusat Penilaian Pendidikan Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

[15] Suyono, S. (2007). Dimensi, Jenjang dan Asesmen Perilaku Berliterasi Siswa di Sekolah. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, *14*(2). https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.17977/JIP.V14I2.23