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THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL INNOVATION FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN TERE LIYE'S SI ANAK KUAT

Abstrak

In many cases in Indonesian rural area, innovation is one of key words for poverty alleviation. The novel *Si Anak Kuat* by Tere Liye describes how an innovation becomes a option to alleviate poverty in rural areas on the island of Sumatra and how Amelia, the main character in this novel, carries out innovation diffusion steps. Through discourse analysis, this research aims at revealing the characteristics of diffusion of innovation implemented in Tere Liye's *Si Anak Kuat* that cause the innovation, in this case is substituting old coffee plants with new and high quality one, can be accepted by all villagers. The results show that the innovation in the novel comes into its acceptance to all villagers due to its highly economical relative advantages, its highly compatibility, triability, and also its observability. The innovation is also supported by its hardly complexity.

Keywords: Discourse Analysis, Diffusion, Innovation, Novel, Tere Liye

Abstrak.

Dalam banyak kasus di daerah pedesaan di Indonesia, inovasi menjadi salah satu kata kunci dalam pengentasan kemiskinan. Novel *Si Anak Kuat* karya Tere Liye menggambarkan bagaimana sebuah inovasi menjadi pilihan untuk mengentaskan kemiskinan di daerah pedesaan di Pulau Sumatera dan bagaimana Amelia, tokoh utama dalam novel ini, melakukan langkah-langkah difusi inovasi. Melalui analisis wacana, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap karakteristik difusi inovasi yang diterapkan dalam novel *Si Anak Kuat* karya Tere Liye yang menyebabkan inovasi tersebut, dalam hal ini penggantian tanaman kopi yang sudah tua dengan tanaman kopi yang baru dan berkualitas, dapat diterima oleh seluruh masyarakat desa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa inovasi dalam novel ini dapat diterima oleh seluruh warga desa karena memiliki keuntungan relatif ekonomis, kompatibilitas yang tinggi, dapat dicoba, dan dapat diamati. Inovasi ini juga didukung oleh kerumitannya yang hampir tidak ada.

Kata kunci: Analisis Wacana, Difusi, Inovasi, Novel, Tere Liye

INTRODUCTION

Learning always faces obstacles. This may happens in mathematics (Hasan, N.F. & Prabawanto, 2023), (Manik et al., 2023), and also in learning language (Mitsigkas, 2015). Learning language through literature proves to be more flouwerish. It is shown by the result of action research conducted by Mitsigkas (Mitsigkas, 2015). The results show that the use of novels in language classroom increased the students' interest and curiosity for a previously unknown genre in the second language in which they were never exposed to and initiated an unprecedented incentive for learning the language through literature. Learning was treated more positively, the students' participation increased considerably, and they scored higher in tests.

Additionally, literature helped students to develop a more autonomous stance towards learning and promote critical thinking. Consequently, the next step was to take the intervention of action research into the next level and empirically examine how novels were seen, if at all, as a language teaching material in the classroom by both teachers as well as students. This form of research initiated this project and therefore matches with the perspectives of Hall (Hall, 2005) and Paran (Paran, 2006) who strongly advocate the need for data driven.

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To take benefits from teaching language through literature, in this case is novel, we need to disclose the novel through discourse analysis. Concerning this, Renkema (Renkema, 1993) proposes two approaches, namely psycholinguistic approach and sociolinguistic approach. On psycholinguistic approach Renkema (Renkema, 1993) suggests using Mandler and Johnson's Remembrance of Things Parsed (Mandler, J.M, Johnson, 1977), while for sociolinguistic approach, Renkema suggests Labov's Uncovering the Event Structure of Narrative (Labov, 2001).

In connection with language teaching through literature, therefore, discourse analysis can be a tool or strategy to make disclosure the novel. Hence, discourse analysis can also be used as strategy to teach the content of a novel in language teaching.

To be more specific, the novel entitled *Si Anak Kuat* by Tere Liye (Liye, 2013) brings the discourse of diffusion of innovation in poverty alleviation in Indonesian rural context. Innovation, as a matter of fact, is the key word in poverty alleviation efforts in Indonesia. That is as explained in the results of research by Tirmidi on the phenomenon of innovative community forest development in Probolinggo Regency which not only has an impact on ecological improvements but also increases the economy of the people there (Tirmidi, 2021). Similar findings are also stated by Setyo W (Setyo W., AT, Sumartini, Syarifuddin, 2013), Sudibia and Aain (Sudibia, I Ketut, Aain, 2013), (Afrizal et al., 2023), (Biswal et al., 2023), (Danilwan, 2020), (Fahmi & Arifianto, 2022), (Kartini & Kaltum, 2022), (Peterson, 2015), (Russell et al., 2023), (GEORGE Vukotich, 2009), (Ting & Yongkun, 2023).

A novel entitled *Si Anak Kuat* (The Strong Child) by Tere Liye (Liye, 2013) is a novel that tells about the implementation of the culture of gotong royong in traditional Indonesian society on alleviating poverty problem. It was told that. In a village level meeting, it was discussed about the problems faced by a villager named Bahar who was going to sell his coffee plantation because his son would get married. In that situation Bahar did not have sufficient funds to celebrate it because the coffee harvest in Bahar's plantation that year was failed. Bahar was also desperate for his coffee plants are old, nor productive, and some of the them are even bare of fruit. For this reason, he intends to sell his coffee plantation!

In response to Bahar's plan, the village elders who were present and took part in the meeting that night thought hard about Bahar's fate in the future if he actually sold his one and only coffee plantation. Complication happened because the participants of the meeting realized that Bahar's problem was not only his own; but it also belonged to all villagers for unproductive coffee plants did happen to all that of the villagers'. In the midst of stalemate of finding out solution, Amelia, Syahdan's youngest daughter, the host of the meeting, urged a suggestion to replace the coffee trees in Bahar's plantation with new and superior quality coffee seeds. To apply this idea, Amelia asked the elders to borrow village treasury money to be used as pawn money for implementing this innovation in Bahar's garden. The money would be given to Bahar and as the consequence the field would be owned by village.

Amelia's idea was welcomed by the participants, but approval from all villagers remained a problem. There was on condition that in case one of the villagers disagrees, then this brilliant idea had to be canceled. Amelia and her friends, therefore, had to go around the village, meeting residents one by one to obtain approval from each of them. Finally, after big debates, obstacles, and rejection, Amelia's idea was unanimously agreed upon.

From the synopsis above, it is illustrated that there is a new idea (innovation) introduced by Amelia to overcome the problem, namely the threat of village resilience caused by the potential for poverty faced by the villagers. It is not enough just to be introduced, the new idea (innovation) must be widely spread and accepted by the villagers. For this reason, Amelia had to fight so that this new idea could widely spread up and be accepted by all the villagers.

This research is intended to describe in depth how an innovation, in this case is sustainable development, is disseminated and convinced to all villagers so that in the end it can be accepted by all villagers. For this reason, although there are some aspects of diffusion of Innovation, this research focuses on what characteristics of innovation applied in Tere Liye's *Si Anak Kuat* that cause the innovation is accepted by all villagers are.

In general, the theory of the diffusion of innovation is a theory that until now has not been easily defined clearly and completely. Even though there have been many studies on it, each study

only focuses on different elements of the innovation diffusion process, so that until now these studies are still meta-theories of diffusion (Bellanca, 2006).

Since the 1960s, the diffusion of innovations has been applied in studies as diverse as education, public health, communications, marketing, geography, sociology, and economics. These studies range from fast diffusion, such as the Internet, to diffusion that fails, such as the Dvorak keyboard which is an innovation from the QWERTY keyboard.

Broadly speaking, the theory of innovation diffusion has developed in four stages. The first stage was in the early 20th century where Gabriel Tarde, a French lawyer, published a book entitled the *Laws of Imitation* (1903), which introduced for the first time the S-curve (S-Shape) of the diffusion curve. Then in the 1920s, anthropologists from Germany and Austria conducted cultural studies. The development of the third stage is the most fundamental stage where Ryan and Gross Iowa hybrid seed corn conduct a study on the diffusion of innovation in the field of rural sociology. This happened in the 1940s. And the fourth stage of development was in the 1960s when an explosion in the diffusion of innovation studies began in Latin American, African and Asian countries (Bellanca, 2006).

The most complete presentation of the theory of the diffusion of innovation and which later became the main reference in this field is that presented by Everett M. Rogers (Rogers, 1983) in his book entitled *Diffusion of Innovation*, which was first published in 1962, and then periodically re-edited. Through this book Rogers wants to explain the process of adopting a new behavior or culture in a social system. By reviewing more than 500 empirical studies in the early 1960s, Rogers hypothesized that in order to be able to be disseminated and absorbed by society, innovations required a certain period of time and within that period the stages of the adoption process occurred.

The population in which diffusion takes place is categorized into different groups based on their propensity to join in on the innovation and the rate of adoption. Rogers' proposition is that early adopters are a model group for other clients to follow, and conversely later groups that join in the adoption of innovations are called laggards. Waisbord (2000, in (Bellanca, 2006) writes that this follow-up group is assumed to be a group that describes most of the third world population. In relation to the latest modernization theory, Rogers estimates that the smallholder (peasant) subculture is an obstacle to innovation, and automatically, as an obstacle to development itself.

However, breaking away from media-centrism, Waisbord (2000, in (Bellanca, 2006) concluded that the media has a very important role in increasing public awareness. Nonetheless, interpersonal communication and personal sources are very important media in making decisions on the adoption of innovations. The effectiveness of field workers in transmitting information on development projects in agricultural areas shows this. As a consequence, Rogers introduced a triad model of the communication networks involved in it. The components in the triad are change agents, beneficiaries, and communicators (Waisbord, 2000 in (Bellanca, 2006).

Another important finding from diffusion research as shown in studies on farmers, is that change is not driven by economic motivations but is more influenced by communication and culture. This finding is important because the goal of the diffusion of innovations during the 1970s to the end of the century was agriculture in the third world.

Related to the not yet established definition of the diffusion of innovation, Rogers offers a concept which states that the diffusion of innovation is a process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels, within a certain time span, within a social system. Thus, the main elements of this theory are the innovation itself, the channels of communication, the time period, and the social system in which the innovation is introduced.

The first element is the innovation itself. Innovation is an idea, practice or object that is considered new by members of a society or a social unit. Related to innovation, a number of factors interact with each other in influencing the diffusion process. The characteristics of innovation, as viewed by members of the social system, determine the speed at which it can be absorbed by society. An innovation that is seen as having a high degree of relative advantage, high compatibility, high trialability, high observability, and low complexity, will be more quickly absorbed by society (Rogers, 1983).

Relative advantages what Rogers meant was the degree of prominence of an innovation that is perceived to be higher than the practice or idea it is to replace. Meanwhile, what is meant by compatibility is the level of compatibility of innovation with the values, practices, previous experiences, and needs that exist in the community concerned. In addition to the characteristics above, an innovation also has intrinsic factors that also affect its speed of adoption. The intrinsic factors consist of form, function, and meaning (Rogers, Everett M., Shoemaker, 1971).

Concerning the characteristics of innovation that is widely absorbed, Al-Seghayer (Al-Seghayer, 2017) who conducts a research aiming at succinctly identify the key variables that lead ESL/EFL teachers to distinctive success finds that the characteristics of successful ESL/EFL teachers embedded within five central dimensions, along with their underlying structures, namely (a) display explicit awareness of the cognitive knowledge dimension of language teaching; (b) develop profound knowledge of related content, that is, disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technological pedagogical knowledge; (c) attain a high level of English language proficiency; (d) possess certain unique personality traits; and (e) possess other related key variables. Other proofs about the importance of the characteristics of innovation upon the success of diffusion of innovation are provided by Bajada (Bajada et al., 2022), Suharto (Suharto, 2022), and Suryadi (Suryadi et al., 2020).

One more factor, however, that received less attention in the past but has recently received serious attention is related to efforts to accelerate an innovation, namely the level of ability of an innovation to be changed or modified by users in the process of its adoption and implementation. This factor by Rogers (Rogers, 1983) is called a modification (re-invention). New ideas or innovations change and evolve during the diffusion process, that is, when experiencing movement from one adopter to another.

It can be concluded that an innovation will accelerate its diffusion if it has supporting factors. The supporting factors are relative advantage, conformity with previously developed values and norms, ability to be experimented with, ability to see results immediately, and level of difficulty that is not too high a demand.

METHOD

This research is designed to expose how the writer of the novel makes meaning and communicates it within and across different social and cultural groups. This definition is in line with Gee's concept of discourse analysis (Gee, 2011). So it belongs to qualitative research.

Applying Gee's concept into narrative writing, in this case is novel, the researcher employs Renkema's ((Renkema, 1993) suggestion of using Mandler and Johnson's story structure (Mandler, J.M, Johnson, 1977). This research, therefore, employs Mandler and Johnson's story structure to explain the structure of the story. Through this step, the setting and the episodes are exposed so that the main story of the novel can be clearly displayed.

In the next step, discourse analysis upon diffusion of innovation theory is thoroughly dismantled. To expose the discourse, as a matter of fact, Gee's inter-textuality tool is adopted. When the discourse of diffusion of innovation is conducted, inter-textuality analysis with diffusion of innovation theories and previous researches is used.

Funded by Universitas Nurul Jadid, this research is conducted in 2023 (Januari 2023-October 2023). The instruments of the research are the researchers themselves. Through our five senses, we collect and interpret data from the story in the novel and other texts used to do intertextual analysis. Besides our senses, Mandler and Johnson's (Mandler, J.M, Johnson, 1977) story structure is also employed as instrument to filter whether the data needed are sufficient enough or not. Last but not the least, the researchers use Gee's inter-textuality tool on deciding the discourse.

The next aspect is data collection technique. To collect the data, the researchers do the followings. First the researchers read the novel. This must be done to collect information to what part of each chapter belongs in Mandler and Johnson's story structure.

After reading the whole chapters of the novel, the researcher come to data reduction. In this step, the data are classified into two categories: the relevant and the irrelevant one. The criteria used in this step is Mandler and Johnson's (Mandler, J.M, Johnson, 1977) story structure.

Information that does not belong to the structure is reduced so that on relevant information remains displayed.

After conducting data reduction, the next step is displaying data. Displayed data is in the form of synopsis, simple story, and story structure. This step is the final step in the procedures of data collection technique.

On the basis of the synopsis or simple story, and story structure, Gee’s intertextual analysis technique is started. On the process of identifying the discourse comparing or contrasting the data in the story and information in theory is done. The description of how the data from these two different sources are compared and contrasted can be presented in the following table.

The steps of the analysis is, first, identifying the elements of the theory. In this case the theory used is diffusion of innovation theory. After identifying the the elements of the theory, we come to textual analysis where the presence of text in the story and its relevance to theory are convinced.

Table 1 Intertextuality Tool Analysis

No	The Elements of theory	Textual analysis	Intertextual Analysis

Finally, the researchers give their perspective as well as their opinion about the connection between the two texts (the text from the story and the text from theory) in intertextual analysis column.

RESULTS

Due to some limitations, despite of presenting completely all findings and discussion, the results only consist of simple story or synopsis, and the intertextual analysis of the story. The synopsis is as the followings.

Amel who wants to be called Eli, just like her eldest sister, hates to be the youngest child in her family. She identifies that she is always controlled but never controls anyone. She also always gets old clothes from her older sister rather that the new ones.

At school, Amel had four classmates who are also the youngest children in family. So they build a gang named “Si Anak Bungsu” or “the Youngest” The gang consists of Amelia, Maya, Norris, and Tambusai.

In an elderly meeting which is held in her House, Amel proposes an idea of changing coffee plants into the superior ones in order to avoid failed harvest and to alleviate poverty of the people. This idea comes from experience of visiting nearby forest with Uncle Unus’ guidance.

In the meeting, Amel proposes coffee plants replacement because the trees are to old to produce alot. This proposal certainly faces many challenges from the village residents because the idea needs a lot of funds. The funds, as a matter of fact, is that owned by the residents. Furthermore, the proposal is perceived to be too risky due the replacement model.

Responding this challenge, with firm and strong determination, Amel and her gang set a demo plot in the back yard of their school after having permission from Pak Bin, the only teacher in the school. Also with the help from Uncle Unus, Amel and the gang have to visit residents to get their approval.

Their efforts are warmly accepted by the residents. In a formal meeting that is attended by all residents, the proposal is agreed. The village will make a real demo plot in a land bought from one of the residents.

Everything had gone smoothly until someday when flood comes and dashes all the hope. The seeds in the experimental field are drifted. Having reality that all the sprouts are drifted away, Amel cries. She feels sorrow but she has to come up with all what happened.

Twenty years later, Amelia returns to her village with all her dreams. She comes back with her two doctoral degrees: Doctor of Pedagogy and Doctor of Network Culture. When she steps on her village, She declares, "I am Amelia. This village is my world".

DISCUSSIONS

Theoretically, the first characteristic of successfully diffused innovation is its highly relative advantages. *Relative advantages* means the degree of prominence of an innovation that is perceived to be higher than the practice or idea to be replaced. In this novel, the relative advantages is replacing old coffee trees with better and more productive coffee trees. It is hoped that with this innovation the community will avoid crop failure.

"I once again looked at my father, who this time nods at me. OK, I swallowed hard, steeled my heart, started to speak up. At first, my sentences were still broken, but over time they became more fluent. In a loud voice, I suggested that the villagers discuss the possibility of replacing all the coffee stalks in the fields with qualified seeds so that there will be no more neither fail to harvest, nor unproductive coffee. This could be a way out to make our lives better." Said Amelia (Chapter 27 – page 362).

In this quote, the proposed innovation is replacing old coffee trees with better and more productive ones. It is hoped that with this innovation the community will avoid crop failure on their lands. Furthermore, the existing coffee trees will become productive because they are replaced with new coffee trees. So Amel and her friends do not introduce new plants other than coffee, but replacing the old and unproductive coffee with the new and superior one.

In other quotation we find what Amel and her friends needs are only massive socialization. "So this is what we will do. We will do what Uncle Unus called as massive socialization to the entire population of the village". Said Amel. They have to explain to the villagers that the total age of productive coffee stalks is 25 years. If the current coffee stems are 10 years old, the remaining productive life of the stems are 15 years. Hence, if the coffee stalks are not replaced, the total coffee harvest for 15 years is 15 x 600 kg, which is 9000kg or 9 tons. If the coffee stems are replaced now, residents will lose 3 years of harvest. The total coffee harvest for the remaining 12 years is 12 x 2000 kg, which is 24,000 kg or 24 tons. It is clear that if there is no replacement, then the villagers will lost their opportunity amounting to 15 tons of coffee beans (Chapter 31- page 417)

It is clear that in terms of relative advantages that the advantages is on economical view, and this point of view is the concern of the villagers at that time. So, even though there are other advantages of replacing old coffee stalks with the new superior one, but economical aspect is the aspect that is socialized to the villagers. As it is written in the story, because of its economical advantages then all the villagers can accept the innovation even though they have to make gambling upon their village fund.

The next characteristic of diffused innovation is compatibility. Compatibility is the level of compatibility of innovation with the values, practices, previous experiences, and needs that exist in the community concerned. Compatibility of the innovation in this novel is very high due to the fact that the villagers are the best parent coffee trees. The innovation only needs replacing the old tree with the new and superior one. In the story we can also find that Uncle Unus is confident that the villagers will be able to plant the coffee and he is also confident that Amel and her other friends, even though they are still children, will be able to plant the new superior coffee seeds.

"We have found the best mother tree. The fruit is dense and large, the trunk is sturdy, the branches are long and even, the leaves are wide, healthy and don't break. According to Uncle Unus, we can sow coffee beans into seeds (Chapter 27- pg 362).

From this quotation it is clear that what the villagers need is only showing the new coffee bean that is superior. The rest, in this term is the technology, they will be able to handle it.

The third characteristic there is triability which means the ability of the innovation to be tried with all the limitations that exist. In this novel, in Uncle Unus' supervision, Amel and her friends are supervised to sow the beans into seeds, and planting the seeds in polybags.

Amel tells her friends, "This morning Uncle Unus picked all the fruit from the coffee tree."

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Uncle Unus explained, "We need about two thousand good seeds." Then the coffee cherries from the good mother tree were spilled on a tarpaulin. Uncle Unus ordered Amel, Maya, Norris, and Tambusai to stomp on them so that the skin of the coffee berries peeled off, but the horn skin didn't come off. Juha and Pendi immediately took water from the pool, filled two buckets full, put the two buckets in the middle, Uncle Unus then told us to pour the coffee beans that had been stepped on into the bucket filled with water. After sorting the seeds, Uncle Unus poured ash over the coffee beans to remove the mucus from the fruit, put them back in the bucket filled with water, then soaked them for five minutes in the fungicide liquid that had been prepared. Finally, the most exciting part was when we planted the coffee beans on beds of loose soil mixed with drum fertilizer. Uncle Unus explained how the beans were planted, we started scooping up each coffee bean.

Here we can see that the triability is high. The preparation process for sowing coffee seeds is triable. It starts from peeling the skin from the coffee seeds; then, sorting them to get the best ones. After that, the sorted seeds must be coated with rubbing ash. This will remove the coffee slime. Finally, the seeds is ready to be planted. All these steps are familiar with the villagers for they are coffee planters.

The next characteristic is observability, namely the ability to see the results by the public. This characteristic must be easily observed. In this novel, the demo plot is observable for it is conducted in the back yard of the school. All the process and the results, therefore, is observable due to it is accessible for all villagers.

That morning, after days of being impatient, after peeking at the tiny holes in the coffee beans, amidst the soft sunlight, birds chirping loudly in the trees, insects rattling singing, together we finally witnessed how beautiful a process is. Look, the expanse of raised soil that was previously just mute, lumps of loose brown-black soil with chunks of drum fertilizer, is now filled with hundreds of coffee sprouts, the tree of life, the sprouts are neatly lined up, emerging from holes in the ground. It is just like blooms. Like a line of soldiers, appearing in unison, surely last night these coffee beans germinated.

Due to the fact that the demo plot is in the back yard of the school. The villagers may come and see directly. They also witness that the seeds are fertile and healthy. This becomes a proof that the new coffee beans are suitable for their lands.

The last characteristic is complexity, namely the level of difficulty to understand and to use. In a successful innovation, this characteristic must be low. It is stated in the novel that even though it was new seeds, but the technology of planting is not strange to the villagers due to the fact that they are coffee planters. It is true that the villagers never try new things, because in their minds (mindsets) it will be much better to maintain what already exists rather than taking the risk of trying new things with uncertain results.

"You mean, we will make as many seeds as possible from these coffee berries, Amel?" Kak Bujuk turned to me after taking a moment to check the coffee beans, for making sure.

I nodded firmly.

"We have never sown coffee seeds, Amel. No one knows how to do it." Mang Dullah sighed.

"Uncle Unus can teach us, sir. I will do it."

"Are you alone, Amel?" Mang Dullah looked at me in disbelief.

"not alone. Maybe school friends will be willing to help."

"Gosh, this really doesn't make sense. So even if the seeds are ready, what about the costs of starting a new field? Who is willing to turn their fields into an experiment?"

Yes, if it works, what if it fails? "It's all in vain, the old coffee stalks have already been cut down, the new ones have failed to bear fruit," Mang Dulah listed his next worry.

It can be seen from the text that there will be no problem with the technology for Amel, her friends, and Uncle Unus can handle that. The worrying outstanding problem is providing funds for buying the land and to the cost of stewarding the new superior coffee plants.

CONCLUSIONS

Instead of always relying on elderly people in conducting innovation, the novel show that an innovation that is hoped to be able to make better life can be done even by children: Amelia

and her friends in the gang of youngest children or “Anak Bungsu”. The gang consists of a twelve-year-old children, who are in the fifth year. It shows that innovation can be carried out by anyone. No matter whether s/he is a child, young person, or elderly person. The first thing that comes into consideration is that the characteristic of the innovation must be high in its relative advantages, highly compatible, highly triable, highly observable, and lowly complexity. With these characteristics, the innovation will be highly diffused.

The novel, therefore, proves two things: (1) the innovation is successfully carried out by children, and (2) the characteristic of the innovation are high in its relative advantages, highly compatible, highly triable, highly observable, and lowly complexity. From the proofs we can motivate our students to be innovative and to be brave to be innovators.

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