THE TENOR AND FIELD OF THE CONVERSATIONS IN BAHASA INGGRIS KELAS X

Dwi Rukmini, Ana Sugiati
English Department
Semarang State University
Semarang
wiwidwirukmini@yahoo.com

Abstract
This study was conducted because of the researchers’ disappointment when they found that the English textbook provided for the tenth graders of all senior high schools (general, vocational, Islamic) was only one entitled Buku Bahasa Inggris Kelas X which was published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. It focused on the tenor and field of the conversations available in that book, therefore all the conversations in that textbook were taken as the data. The language model of Derewianka (1990) which suggests that language when it is used to communicate (spoken or written) is put and influenced by two contexts; context of culture and context of situations was used as the instrument to analyse the data. The context of situation gives rise to register which consists of three dimensions: field, tenor and mode. In this study, the mode dimension was not analyzed since the data were all in the form of spoken texts (conversations). The results reveal that the tenors and fields do not reflect the vocational students actually involve with when communicating in their environments (at schools and work places). These might be because the book is not specifically designed for them. The suggestion is that the English book for vocational students should have been specified considering that their needs of learning English is different from the needs of general high school students.

Keywords: conversation, tenor, field, vocational

Introduction
Referring to the Government Regulation No 20, 2003, a vocational high school is a secondary school of which the instruction process aims to prepare students with the skills and knowledge of particular field to be able to work professionally or continue to higher education based on their study program field. The study programs are such as engineering (civil, mechanical, automotive, electrical, etc.), accounting, information and communication technologies, tourism, graphic arts, etc. Considering it, the English given to the students is English for Specific Purposes (ESP)–the English given has specific ultimate goal that is to enable them to communicate in that language based on the students real needs which are different from one study program to the other. This implies that the learning material should be relevant to the students’ environment when using English. Hutchinson and Water (1981:8) stated that the relevant English course to the needs would improve learners’ motivation and thereby make learning better and faster. Furthermore they wrote that in ESP, all decisions as to content and method are based on the learners’ reason for learning. Richards (2006: 17) stated that ESP as a learning approach gives more emphasis on teaching of specific language element and communicative skills which are needed by the learners. The main goal of ESP is to provide relevant English language instructions based on the students’ needs. It is different from general high school in which English subject might concentrate on theory and abstract conceptual knowledge and aims to prepare students to continue their study to higher institution (university). They have different concept, goal and needs. Therefore, the curriculum and the English material should also be different.
In the preliminary research, the researchers found that the English textbook provided for all senior high schools (general, vocational, islamic) was only one entitled Buku Bahasa Inggris Kelas X based on 2013 curriculum which was published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in 2016. Therefore, vocational and general high school students have the same English learning materials.

In this study, the researchers did the further research for revealing if the English learning material especially conversation available in that textbook consider the needs of vocational high school students, particularly on the tenor and field of the conversations.

**Conversation**

Conversation is a talk between two people or more to share ideas and information. It can be a dialogue, face to face between two people or more and can be mediated, such as when electronic technology is used for talking or sending a text. A real conversation is spontaneous and interactive. It has opening to begin conversation and closing expressions to end the conversation.

Conversation analysis is study of talk. Hutchby and Wooffitt (2002:13), it is the systemic analysis of the talk produced in everyday situations of human interactions: talk-in-interaction. It studies about how ordinary talk is organized in interaction. It is not just study of talk but of talk–in-interaction. Talk is the verbal instantiation of language but conversation analysis is only interested in language as such; its actual object of the study is interactional organization of social activities.

**Text and Context**

In communication, people use a text to exchange meanings. A text is any meaningful stretch of language–oral (spoken) or written (Derewianka, 1990:17). Not all texts are the same; they have different models and language choices since they are influenced by two contexts: context of culture and context of situation. At the level of cultural context, language is used for some purposes such as giving information, recounting what happened, giving instruction, explaining phenomena, and arguing for a position. These purposes are realized respectively as genre. The cultural context influences the structure of the texts to successfully achieve the purpose of the text. The purpose of recount texts, for example, is to tell what happened. To achieve its purpose, the text will have a different set of structures: orientation, series of events, and coda. Another example is a procedural text of which its purpose is to tell how something is accomplish–how to do or make something; the structure would move through stalling the goal, outlining any materials or equipment needed and detailing the steps to be taken.

Texts differ not only on their cultural context but also according to their situational context. Derewianka (1990:18) stated three key features in any context of situation: the field, tenor, and mode. These three features together determine the register of the texts.

The field being developed is the subject matter of the texts (Derewianka, 2012:132). It will influence the language choices for expressing and connecting the idea. Thornbury (2005:91) defines it as a topic of the text. In a school context, language choices of a text will vary depending on the curriculum and the field. Every subject has different language choices. A text for tourism students has quite different language choices from a text for engineering students.

The tenor of the context refers to ‘who is involved in the interaction?’–will influence our language choices for interacting with others (Derewianka, 2011:6). It is the relationship between the participants of the texts (husband/wife, teacher/student, doctor/patient, and shopkeeper/customer) and the relationship between people (intimate,
familiar, distant or frequent). The other factors such as age, gender, authority, how the status, also influence our language choices. A guide, for example, might interact with the tourist by asking some questions formally (Have you ever visited this beautiful place? Sir); giving commands (taking pictures inside this castle is prohibited but you could take pictures of the outside of this building). The tour guide might attempt to persuade the customer through the emotion (you will love the places). The language choices that the guides use when they have conversation with the tourist are different with the language that they use when they have conversation with their friends.

The mode is the channel of communication being used: written or spoken (Derewianka, 2012:132). It will influence the text structure and organization. If the mode is spoken the language will be more spontaneous and interactive. If the mode is written, the language will be more considered, edited, dense and cohesive within the text itself.

**Methodology**

In this study, the researchers employ a qualitative approach. The source of data is the English textbook, *Bahasa Inggris kelas X*. The data are all conversations of the concerned textbook. The units of analysis are the register (field and tenor) of the conversations. The mode is not analyzed since the data are all in the form of spoken texts (conversations).

The theory which is proposed by Derewianka (1990) is used as the instrument to analyze the data. The steps of data analysis are identifying the conversation models, identifying the tenors and the fields of the conversations and comparing the tenor and field to the need of vocational high school students.

**Finding and Discussion**

This part describes the findings and discussions of the field and tenor available in the conversation texts. The textbook consists of 15 chapters and provide 8 conversation models. In details, the findings and discussions are presented based on field and tenor in every conversation.

**Conversation 1**

In the first conversation (page 17) the field is introduction and greeting. There are some expressions in the conversation which refers to greeting (e.g. Hello), introducing (e.g. I am Edo. May I know your name please?), talking about self (e.g. I am from Raja Ampat. I work in a tourism resort). It is between Edo and Slamet who meet for the first time in a party. They introduce themselves to each other. The tenor is distant, and formal, even frozen, influenced by the fact that neither of the speakers have met nor know much about each other. This is reflected by using the expression may I know your name, please?

The social function of this conversation is introducing and mentioning identity to develop interactional communication with others. By the end of the lesson, students (general, vocational and Islamic) should be able to introduce themselves to the others.

The conversation copes the demand of the general/vocational/Islamic school students in practicing conversation. The field of the conversation is related to the field study in the vocational school (e.g. business and tourism). The field considers the need of vocational students in the general conversation.

**Conversation 2**

The conversation (page 23) is much more in keeping informality of conversation between some friends in the office. The field is complementing to the new director,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sinta</th>
<th>: I am very happy for you, Alif. Now that you are the director of the company, I believe the company will develop even faster.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alif</td>
<td>: thank you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The tenor is between some friends, informal situation as seen in the use of informal addressing such as You deserved it, Man. That conversation is interactional conversation which has a function to maintain relationship.

**Conversation 3**
The field of this conversation (page 24) is also complementing (e.g. Cita, congratulations for being the first winner …); the tenor is very informal, the participants know each other.

**Conversation 4**
The example of the conversation is also between two friends (Rahmi and Sinta). They use informal situation. The field of the conversation is also complimenting.

**Conversation 5**
The topic of the conversation (page 40) is holiday plans. The conversation is between friends in the classroom. The situation is informal. It can be seen below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Riri</th>
<th>: It will be a long weekend soon. Do you have any plans?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Santi</td>
<td>: Uhm, I’m not sure. I don’t have any idea yet. I think I might stay at home.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conversation 6**
In this example, the field of the conversation is TV talk show (invention). The situation is formal between the host and the guest of TV talk show as seen below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Host</th>
<th>: Hello and welcome to our talk show tonight, Great Inventors!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orville</td>
<td>: We invented airplane.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conversation 7**
The field is heroic monument. The tenor is informal, between friends.

**Conversation 8**
The field is the biography of BJ Habibie and the tenor is also between two friends.

**Conclusion**
The tenors and fields do not reflex the vocational students actually involve with when communicating in their environments; those are natural as the book is not proposed to use by them. The suggestion is that the English book for vocational students should have been specified; furthermore most of them will work after graduated from that institution.

**References**


Asuransi Sosial Pegawai Negeri Sipil. Jakarta: Menteri Hukum dan Hak Asasi Manusia.
