

CHAPTER I

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1.1 Background of the study

So far, people communicate with others through language, both written and oral. And people communicate in order to convey opinions, feelings, thoughts, informations and so on. Language, therefore, is a two- way interaction between a speaker and a listener. Thus, only people who know another well can communicate efficiently in a way that is often completely incomprehensible to an outsider, someone who does not belong to the group of people sharing a particular set of experiences or knowledge. This can also be applied in the language formation of comic strips which sometimes needs a set of particular knowledge to interpret them.

As long as the writer observes, comic strips are valuable reading because they can function both as a means of refreshing the mind and as a means of criticising the society. The first function is already clear as usually the pictures and the language used by the characters are funny. The second function is shown in the following example:

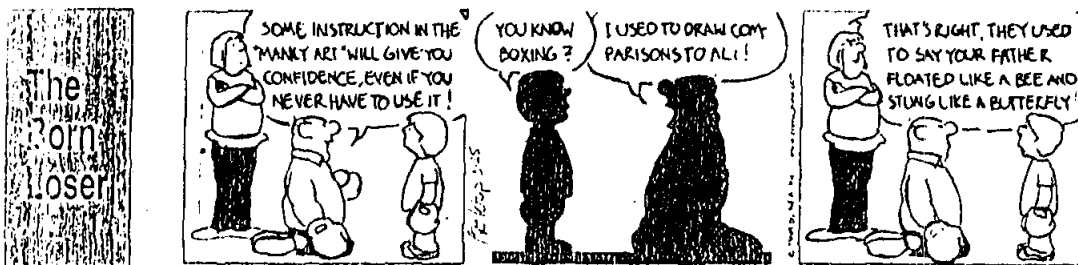


picture1. Huge Mistake

This comic strips represent a condition in a society who has no concern with others. This condition can easily be found in today's society. In such humorous way this comic strips brings about the problem of apathy which is widely-spread among most people in almost every society. The pun of the humor can be seen through the comic strips. The writer observes the pun of the humor from the expectation and reality in those comic strips. In a real world or society, when a person does a mistake, others will notice easily and surely will ridicule the person and the person will find a way so that no one can notice his mistake. What has happened in these comic strips, however, is the opposite. The man made a huge mistake which can be easily noticed by others, but no one noticed.

It is also funny that the man did not try to keep his mistake hidden. Therefore, comic strips have humor because sometimes the reality is so different from the expectation.

The writer also observes that most of comic strips have no formal linguistic links to connect the utterances produced by their characters. In other words, the language formation above is the same as what Widowson defines as a coherent but not cohesive text. The following example below is not cohesive but still coherent :



picture 2. Boxing

The example above shows that there is an absence of formal linguistic links connecting the son's questions to the father's answer in the second column. However, the text can still be categorized as a coherent text. By saying "I used to draw comparisons to Ali", the father means that he was as good as Ali in boxing. So, the father answers only by explaining how good he was in boxing. To be a cohesive text, the father should answer yes or no, not by explaining as shown in the comic strips above.

From what have already been explained above, the writer concludes that to come to an understanding, one cannot depend only on formal linguistic links which is known as cohesion but also semantic links which is known as coherence. Paul

Werth (1984; 60) says that “well formedness” for discourse is not grammaticality but connectivity which can be realized in 4 ways:

The first connectivity or formal connectivity is cohesion which is regarded as a syntactic process of interconnecting sentence in a text, for example are pronouns and conjunctions. The second is collocation or lexical connectivity which is operated by means of semantic field links between lexical items such as “strong” collocates with “coffee” but “powerful” does not. Therefore, “strong coffee” is a typical collocation in English, but “powerful coffee” is not. The following is connectors or logical connectivity, those are lexical items, such as sentence adverbials, for example yesterday, at school and so on. The last is coherence or is semantic connectivity, that is the “umbrella” which covers all discourse connectivity.

Moreover, Werth (1984; 72) adds that coherence emerges as a superordinate term to which cohesion, collocation, an connection are subordinate. Coherence, therefore, includes both formal and semantic connectedness.

Thus, the absence of formal linguistic links in the language formation in most of the comic strips is not a crucial factor in understanding them. There are still other factors which are more important. Based on these facts, the writer wants to analyze those other factors.

1.2 Statement of the problems

In line with the background of the study, the writer would like to investigate the problem as follows:

1. What binds the utterances of the comic strips together in the absence of formal links so that they can form coherent pieces of discourse?
2. What is needed by readers to understand the intended meaning of the comic strips?

1.3 Objectives of the study

Concerning the statement of the problems, this analysis is based on the objectives as follows:

1. To find out the factors that bind the utterances of the comic strips in the absence of formal links so that they can form coherent pieces of discourse.
2. To find out the factors which can make the reader understand the intended meaning of the comic strips.

1.4 Significance of the study

As reading comic strips is very valuable and criticizing, here the writer wants to give a clear idea to the reader especially to the English Department students of Widya Mandala University about how Discourse Analysis Theories can be applied in everyday language, particularly the language of comic strips.

Furthermore the writer hopes that this study can help them in interpreting the comic strips so that they do not find any difficulty in reading comic strips and can take the gist after ward.

1.5 Scope and limitation

To limit the research action, the writer uses comic strips taken from the Jakarta Post Newspaper from January to March 1998 which have no formal link in at least one of the utterances because she wants to concentrate on the implicit coherence of the language used in comic strips (text which are not cohesive but coherent). From those comic strips, the writer will select the comic strips which are talking about social life or interaction, and then she will choose ten of them randomly.

1.6 Definition of key terms

The title of the thesis is An Analysis on the Coherence of the Language Used in Comic Strips Found in Jakarta Post January-March 1998. As such the major terms defined in this section are:

Coherence:

(i). the understandable sentences as related to one another as elements in an acceptable discursive structure (Tannen; 1984: 157).

(ii). is the 'making sense' of a text because of the continuity of senses among the knowledge activated by the expressions of the text (Brown and Yule; 1983: 84).

Comic strips:

a group of cartoons in narrative sequence (Woolf, 1976: 225).

Jakarta Post :

is English newspaper which is issued everyday in Jakarta.

1.7 Organisation of the thesis

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter one presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation and definition of key term. Chapter II deals with review of related literature. Chapter III deals with the methodology of the study. Chapter IV presents the data analysis and interpretation of the findings and the last chapter, chapter V is the conclusion.