

MORALITY IN CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN FAIRYTALE AND ITS IMPLICATION IN LEARNING FRENCH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

The culture of a society is closely related to the language used by the speakers. Moreover, there are opinions saying that in a language there will be patterns of behavior, materials, ideas (beliefs and knowledge), and sentiments (attitudes and norms) of a society that are formed and exposed. This fact is in accordance with the opinion that a language is more than just a communion; it is the relation between individual and sociocultural values. Among all characteristics of culture, language is the most prominent distinguishing feature, since each social group feel themselves as a different entity from other groups. For certain social groups, language is used as the social identity/symbol. Close relation between language and culture is reflected in words used by the society. A concept or way of life in a society can be supported by words and language. Someone's language behavior generally follows the culture of a society where he/she lives, including how the cultural elements appear in the equipment of human life, livelihood, social system, language (and literature) system either written or oral, various of arts, knowledge system, and religious system. Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis states that there is a close relation between the language used by people and how they understand the world and behave in it. Based on 17th Century French fairytales, this article will review the moral values contained in the cultural elements and the implications in learning French as a foreign language.

Keywords: *morality, cultural elements, French learning.*

“What is a language?” is a question that drives language experts and observers to study the nature of language. Language is a tool for us to have social relationship. The words spoken by people refer to a common experience. The words reveal facts, ideas or events that can be communicated as they refer to world's knowledge, which is also known by other people. In addition, the words also reflect the attitudes and beliefs and viewpoints of the author and others. Language is used by groups of people to work together and communicate, and because the groups are various hence they interact with a various life fields which the needs are also various.

Language, further, can also be said as a form of human culture. Silverstein (in Duranti, 1997:7) revealed that the possibility of cultural representations (certain people) depends on the extent of the society's language that allows speakers to utter what is done by words in everyday life so that culture can be described as a tent that copes a various aspects of human life.

The main problem in culture often explains the similarities and differences of culture, either the cultural preservation or the changes from time to time. Changes can only be observed by stability background or cultural preservation. On the other hand, stability can only be understood by the background of changes. If cultures were

not different and did not change, there would not be any problem regarding the changes mechanism. However, we see that one culture is different from another; and in any levels, culture does change from time to time (Kaplan, 2002:3).

Thus, language is our main tool to have social relationship. Words that are said by people refer to a common experience. Those words reveal facts, ideas, or events that can be communicated because they refer to world's knowledge, which is also known by others. In addition, words also reflect the attitudes and beliefs as well as the viewpoints of the authors and others. In this case, language reveals the cultural realities.

Culture and language have close relation. Language is a form of culture, in order to preserve its existence, culture needs to be communicated; and to communicate culture, a language is needed as a communication medium. One way to describe the moral values is through a fairytale. Here, fairytales function as a media to transfer culture, which shows the sides of life culture. From this thought, the readers can be introduced to the broader cultural elements in fairytales, which later they will find in real life.

In outlining the rationale of the study, the researcher intends to find how the moral values in cultural elements in French fairytales collection by Charles Perrault are.

Culture

Culture is a way of life that is developing and shared by a group of people and pass down from generation to generation. Culture is made up of many complicated elements, such as clothes, building, religious system, political system, custom, handicraft, artwork, and language. Based on the definition of culture above, it is also confirmed that culture can be realized in life, which comes from mind and life patterns of human being hence culture can develop and grow as life reference from one generation to another. Meanwhile, language, as well as culture, is an integral part of human being hence many people tend to consider it as something which pass down genetically. When someone tries to communicate with people of different culture and adjusts the differences, it is proved that language is learned.

These cultures are grouped according to seven elements of culture as proposed by Koentjaraningrat (1974:80) namely (1) equipment of human life, (2) livelihood, (3) social system, (4) language (and literature) system, either written or oral, (5) various arts, (6) knowledge system, and (7) religious system As described above, culture is a holistic lifestyle, which is complex, abstract, and broad. Cultural aspects also determine the personality of the people. Hence, we can say that personality is influenced by culture. The personality of an individual is influenced by values and norms in cultural system and social system that are absorbed into himself/herself through the process of socialization and familiarization process during life since his/her childhood.

Morality in Cultural Elements in French Fairytales

Fairytales contain noble values of a nation, especially moral values. If a fairytale is reviewed from the moral values side, hence there will be religious moral values, social moral values, and personality moral values. Religious moral values consist of (1) believing in God's power, (2) believing in the existence of God, (3) leaving things to God, and (4) asking for forgiveness to God. Meanwhile,

individual/personality moral values consist of (1) compliance, (2) bravery, (3) willing to sacrifice, (4) honest, (5) fair and wise, (6) respect and appreciate, (7) work hard, (8) keeping promises, (9) aware of paying back, (10) good manners, (11) humble, and (12) cautious in doing anything. Social moral values include the followings: (1) collaboration, (2) helpfulness, (3) affection, (4) harmony, (5) like giving advice, (6) care about others fate, and (7) like praying for others (Bertens, 2000: 10).

Concerning in the moral values, there are also moral values in the cultural elements, such as (1) Social/Society organization system, (2) Livelihood system, (3) Equipment of human life, (4) Language system, (5) Various arts, (6) Knowledge system, (7) and Religious system. Furthermore, cultural elements embodied by (1) thoughts or ideas, (2) behavior or attitude, (3) artifacts (objects), (Kaplan, 2002: 15).

METHOD

In this study, the researcher uses qualitative approach with content analysis method of Miles and Huberman. Data in the form of a series of words and sentences of moral values that indicate the presence of cultural elements.

Data source of this research is a 17th Century French fairytales collection by Charles Perrault, which consists of *La Belle au Bois Dormant* (Sleeping Beauty), *Le Petite Chaperon Rouge* (The Red Riding Hood), *La Barbe Bleue* (The Blue Beard), *Le Chat Botté* (A Cat With Boots), *Les Fées* (Fairy), *Cendrillon* (Cinderella), *Riquet à La Houpe* (The Riquet Crest), and *Le Petit Poucet* (The Thumb). Here are the findings:

RESULTS

1. Social/Society Organization System

French society organization system in the 17th Century consisted of religious group, nobles, and the *tiers-état* (bourgeois, craftsmen, farmers). France at that time was under the reign of King Louis XIV who was famous for his remark *L'Etat C'est Moi* (The Country is me). He had the idea of the absolute reign, the most powerful and luxurious life. When the royal family lived in luxurious lifestyle, the people suffered from various tax burdens which were very high, such as land tax (*taille*), wheat tax (*gebele*), and wine tax (*aide*). The tax results were not used for the needs of the country but for the needs of the King and the royal families. People suffered from the result of high tax which was charged to them. For the people, it was a gentle extortion done by the King. It caused different social classes between the people and the royal families.

In fairytales such as *La Belle au Bois Dormant*, *Cendrillon*, and *Riquet à la Houpe*, the royal life was described. Signs of the King's power are seen in every fairytale, on the other hand, in the *Le Petit Poucet* and *Le Chat Botté* fairytales, it is told that the farmers were really respectful to the King who ruled at that time. The society organization system in *Riquet à la Houpe* fairytale was about how the society worked together to prepare a wedding of a King's son. Thus, the moral value in the society organization system is the moral value of the relation between one

human being and the others in a social environment in the form of society behaviors which were obedient to their King.

In addition to the King, the bourgeoisie was very dominating in this French fairytales collection. Bourgeois from the nobles and the traders are represented by the characters of Giant and Wolf. The role of the characters in this French fairytales collection, either the Giant or Wolf, contain moral value message of greediness. Wolves in the 17th Century describes the greedy mankind. One of the striking cases of werewolves occurred in France in the beginning of the 17th Century, when Jean Grenier believed himself is a werewolf. According to his testimony, every night he can go around as a wolf but in the daylight he will be back to the human form. He has killed and devoured several kids, kidnapped babies who stay alone at home. In the *Le Petit Poucet*, we can see the society system in a family. Social values shown are the values of helping each other and caring about your siblings. The system of kinship in the family seems clear that the eldest child is more important than the youngest child. In the *Les Fees*, *Le Chat Botte*, *Le Petit Poucet* fairytales, the youngest child is treated unfairly. Thus, the moral values here consist of religious, individual, and social moral values.

2. Livelihood System

The moral values of human and themselves can be seen when the majority of French in the 17th Century had the idea of becoming a farmer. Behavior as a farmer in the *La Belle au Bois Dormant*, *La Barbe Bleue* fairytale was described explicitly by the obedience toward the reign of King Louis XIV.

Another livelihood is shown in the form of the Blue Beard's job in the *Le Barbe Bleue* as a trader. Meanwhile, *Le Petite Chaperon Rouge*, *Le Petit Poucet* describe the life of a carpenter. The livelihood in *La Barbe Bleue* intends to shape a character of a trader who works hard to earn his wealth. On the other hand, *Riquet à la Houppe*, shows the values of honesty in working while in *La Barbe Bleue* the Youngest one lied to her husband.

3. Equipment of Human Life

The results of the oldest culture in the life of humanbeings are clothes, and various equipment needed in daily life.

At that time, clothes were still made of animals' skin, skin of trees and also leaves. As time went by, clothes become the way to determine status, activity, and lifestyle. In the 14th Century, Clothing began to use wool, silk, and fur. In the next century, fashion continued to grow and become more luxurious. In the 17th Century, France became the center of fashion. Fashion in the 17th Century in France was inspired by the dresses of the queens in the Kingdom. Women started to make embroideries needed when they got married. Princesses in the fairytales such as *La Belle au Bois Dormant*, *La Barbe Bleue*, *Cendrillon*, *Les Fees*, and *Riquet à La Houppe* described the clothes worn as long dresses that were made of certain fabrics such as wool and velvet. However, not all men and women were allowed to wear certain fabrics because of the sanctuary laws; the law restricted the use of fabrics. Farmers could not use the clothes because they were limited for the royal environment and nobles. For the noblemen, we can see the appearance is different on the shirts and long hairstyle. *Le Chat Botte* and *Le Petit Poucet* fairytales described the farmers who dressed simply.

This shows the moral value of human relation with other human beings in a social environment associated with differences in social status. The moral value that appears is a sense of indifferent to other human beings. This behavior is reinforced by *Le Chat Botte* that illustrates how hard he tries to fight for the youngest child to be acknowledged by people by fooling the King who passed by to get similar outfit with a prince. In addition to being persistent, the cat in the *Le Chat Botte* fairytale wears boots, which is the symbol of strength. In the *Le Petit Poucet* fairytale, there are giant kids wearing gold crown, which means that they are from the wealthy families.

Houses in this French fairytales collection were described based on the condition of the society at that time. The Kingdom was usually the main setting of the story. Description of kingdoms can be seen in every fairytale. The *Le Chat Botte* fairytale shows that the moral values of an individual to change the social status by working hard, the *Le Petit Poucet* fairytale also shows how the Youngest one fights for his siblings to get out from poverty.

Cutlery in the fairytales are made of gold. It is described in details in the *La Belle au Bois Dormant: On mit devant chacune d'elles un couvert magnifique, avec un étui d'or massif, où il y avait une cuiller, une fourchette, et un couteau de fin or, garni de diamants et de rubis* fairytales. On the tables there were very beautiful cutlery, a pair of spoon and fork and knife that are made of gold, decorated with precious stones and tied in the form of large rings which are also made of pure gold). Also, in the *La Barbe Bleue fairytale: de la vaisselle d'or et d'argent, des meubles en broderie, Dorés et des carrosses tout ...* (the cutlery are made of gold and silver and there are also beautifully carved furniture, even the carriages were also gold-plated). Thus, the moral values shown in the cultural element of equipment of human life are in the forms of clothes, houses, and cutlery, which relate one human being with other human beings in the social environment.

4. Language (and Literature) System

Since the 9th Century, French has been the language of “the people” (vulgarie), far from the Latin, which had been established and used as an intellectual and scientific language. In the beginning of the 16th Century, French became more organized and used as the language of literature and science. Before becoming French in 20th Century and 21st Century, the language had become the language of science and literature in the 17th Century (Husen, 2003:190). It is obvious that language system and literature cannot be separated. Without literature, according to Ratna, language shows only the arrangement of words and sentences. One of the relations between language and literature is through a fairytale. Through fairytales, people can find the thoughts or reflections of the author and can realize the values contained in the fairytales. Readers (literature enthusiasts) not only read the fairytale texts, but also able to capture the values contained therein. The value is offered through the author's collection of French fairytales that contain moral messages; it is reinforced at the end of the story.

5. Various Arts

The 17th Century was a golden Century for French authors, storytellers, and writers. Various forms of art, architecture, proverb, language style and story of

everyday life were created in an aesthetic form. Like other cultural element, this Art was defined as cultural studies literature of artworks in French fairytale collection.

Art embroidery in the 17th Century was used in ladies fashion in the kingdom. Patching and loom tools were portrayed in *La Belle Au Dormant* fairytale. The Princess fell asleep for a hundred years because she was punctured by a loom needle. The personality moral value of this fairytale is carelessness. In *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge* fairytale, a hat was a complimentary fashion. The moral value in this matter is character morality of bravery and strength. *Cendrillon* portrayed Dance through balls. The objective of throwing a ball was to find a wife. Therefore, the moral value of this story is human affair in social circumstances. Further, architecture was portrayed in *La Barbe Bleue* fairytale describing a house with 17th Century luxurious architecture style. Moral value taken from the description of this luxurious house is the moral value of oneself. The Blue Beard's attitude was not identical with beauty and luxury because he was a killer. Art in various forms such as fine art, dance and music will always contain moral values.

6. Knowledge System

The ideas of French Science and Fairytale are interesting to discuss in relation to the moral doctrine in the 17th Century. The characters in fairytales were written in fun and interesting ways. They were written in the era where the authors had reached an advanced and mature thinking and were the author's expression of ideas of human life. Science elements packed in French fairytales show knowledge related to moral values. The ideas presented are actual and in accordance with the current situation because they depict universal matters applying throughout the ages such as power abuse. Moral values described explicitly in this French fairytale collection are the uses of common sense and good manner to defeat human's cruelty and lack of civilization. Meanwhile the moral values related to character education were depicted through the author's worldview in characters' characterization in this fairytale.

7. Religious System

Religious system in this French fairytale collection was found in Fairy character. To many people, fairytales are identical with stories about fairies. In reality, many fairytales are not about fairies but about ordinary things. The Fairy character in this French fairytale collection is a central character. *La Belle Au Bois Dormant*, the fairy character was portrayed as an evil character. She cursed a Princess and made her asleep for a hundred years. In contrary, the fairy character in *Cendrillon* was portrayed as a kind hearted character. She gave Cinderella a gown, a pair of glass slippers, and a carriage to go to a ball thrown by the prince at the castle. A kind hearted fairy was also portrayed in *Les Fees* fairytale. At the time, the fairy characters brought a big influence to societies. Thus, the moral value wanting to be shown through fairy characters was personality value. Cinderella character and the Youngest character in *Les Fees* fairytale were portrayed as humble characters even though their mothers were very cruel to them. Fairy characters played an important role to most societies at that time. In *La Barbe Bleue* fairytale, the fairy character was portrayed in two categories, the good fairy and the evil fairy. Their power was shown through spells in every fairytale. In *La Belle au Bois Dormant*, the evil fairy used a spell to make the princess fall asleep for a hundred years. The good

fairy was portrayed in *Cendrillon* fairytale helping Cinderella with the prettiest gown to be worn at the ball. Meanwhile, in *Les Fees* fairytale, the good fairy used her spell every time the Youngest character spoke making her released strings of pearl and fragrant flowers. In contrary, every time the Eldest character spoke, she released horrible creatures. Besides fairies, giants were also portrayed in this fairytale collection. Ideas of giants were aimed to show the things that should be done or avoided by societies. The big and scary appearance of giants was affirmed with cruel behavior because giants did not believe in God. *La Belle Au Bois Dormant* portrayed how evil a giant descendant mother was. *La Petit Poucet* portrayed that a giant wanted to eat the Little Thumbelina but he ended up killing his seven children.

Catholic was the religion practiced in France. In *La Belle Au Bois Dormant*, when the queen gave birth to a baby, she held a baptism for the baby. The Catholic Church taught that every man born to this world was sinful because of the sin handed down by Adam the first man. Thus, the Church baptized babies to wipe the handed down sins and to let their parents and Godparents to grow the faith in their hearts. Baptism was a way to bring them to Salvation. *La Barbe Bleue* portrayed that French societies as devout Catholic believers. This was shown when The Youngest character begged and prayed to God before she was killed.

Cultural Elements in French Language Studies

French as a foreign language studies does not merely study the aspects of language (vocabulary, articulation, pronunciation, and grammar) and language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but also studies its culture. Introduction to culture in learning French as a foreign language lower misunderstanding cases in communication. Almost all methods of learning French as a foreign language see that language is inseparable with culture. French as a foreign language teaching methods such as Direct Method, Audio Lingual Method, Silent Way, Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, Total Physical Response, Communicative Language Teaching, Task Based, Content Based Instruction, and Genre Based Approach put cultural elements in them.

Nowadays, French as Foreign Language study is more aimed to develop communication skill. Learning to practice the language learned in communication also means learning to behave in a new culture. In French language teaching emphasizing on communication skill, introduction to culture is important. Introduction to culture can be done through simple things such as recognizing lifestyle, custom, tradition, and even philosophy and way of thinking of the native speakers of the language that we are learning. The recognition is aimed to avoid misunderstanding when we are communicating with native speakers of the language that we are learning. French culture teaching must be integrated with language teaching because language is part of culture. There are many materials and ways in introducing and learning French culture. Here are the materials and ways to introduce French culture through literature such as fairytales, romances, poems, movies, and native speakers.

DISCUSSIONS

Sarwono said that language and culture have a reciprocal relation which affect each other (2014:60). Language has important role in understanding culture and the effect of culture in daily life, hence language can follow the development of human's life. Language creates human's culture; on the other hand, culture affect language. Furthermore, Wittgenstein (2000: 14) said that the relation between language and culture is especially in the way they work and think. Nababan also affirms that there is a relation between language and culture (1984: 50-54). Referring to these statements above, it can be said that:

- 1) Language relates to culture, human's culture can't be achieved without culture.
- 2) Language as communication system.
- 3) Deep understanding of culture through language.
- 4) Language behavior follows culture.

Culture in oral and written form influences relationship in various forms of socialization. Ethics, politeness, thing should and shouldn't be done in society taught at school or in family form human behavior through oral language. Meanwhile the use of written language is also formed and socialized through culture. For example, in writing, we have to consider what is appropriate to write, to whom we want to write, the situation, and the appropriate text genre (application, business letter, political leaflet) because writing contain certain sanction in culture conference. Together with culture, those manners form norms to language speakers.

When norms are shaped by the language users, according to Sarwono (2014: 66-68) sometimes there are obstacles in inter culture communication. For example, Bahasa Indonesia and French. One of the obstacles is when someone tries to communicate in French, he/she tends to think about words, phrases, or even sentences which have one meaning. Hence, maybe the face expression and the speaking tone are ignored sometimes.

When a French offers food and get a respond by Indonesian, "*Non, merci*", when they are actually hungry then there will be misunderstanding in translating because phatic communion is something common in Indonesia. In French's culture, when someone says "good morning", it must be followed by the names; for example "*Bonjour, Jeanne*", then they will shake their hands and have deed eye contact, sometimes they even hug or kiss both cheeks each other. What needs to be concerned is that it will be offensive if we do not have eye contact while saying "Bonjour, Jeanne." It offends the values of their individual culture that they highly respect, which will give an impression that you do not pay attention to your speaking partner. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, sometimes people do not pay attention to eye contact when they shake hands. Another example is that when a French compliments an Indonesian, "your bag is nice", usually Indonesian will not accept the compliment and say, "my bag is old and ugly". In the opposite, if the compliment is given to a French, they will respond by saying, "*Merci*" (thank you).

Another obstacle is nonverbal mistake, giving a language message in culture. For Indonesian, non verbal communication which is not polite is giving/taking something using your left hand. In Indonesia, it is impolite to give or take something using your left hand. Kids in Indonesia are educated by saying "use your proper hand" to use right hand when they want to take something from or give something

to someone. Different from French, when we congratulate someone by hand shaking, the gift is held by the left hand and it will be given by the right hand after the handshaking. In French's culture, both activities can be done at the same time. They shake hands by their right hand while giving/taking the gift by their left hands.

Moreover, if we refer to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that is often called language relativity hypothesis which states that a native speaker has different way of thinking (Wardhaugh 2010:230). It is strengthened by Sarwono who stated that in order to understand culture, people need to understand the language since culture is a reflection of a language (2014: 62). Thus, from both statements, it can be summarized that in learning a language, it is better to also understand the culture hence the interaction of learning and teaching French as a foreign language in university, lecturers need to understand the relation between language and culture of French.

Thus, lecturers can give assignments regarding culture, so those cultural elements findings are expected to raise responses from university students and the next process is expression in many forms of French language skills. Related to French language learning, at the moment, the learning is more directed to oral and written skills. To get acceptable French language speech, we need not only grammar ability to make sentences but also cultural awareness to make French sentences acceptable by the native speakers.

From those explanations, it can be concluded that all applied teaching methods of French as a foreign language should consider language as something that cannot be separated from culture. Culture is about points of view, way of thinking, norms, customs, and habits of native speakers. Introduction of culture plays an important role in French learning. The role can lower the misunderstanding in communication both in verbal and non verbal, and stereotype. In addition, the introduction of culture should integrate with the four skills of teaching French, which are *reception orale* (listening), *production orale* (speaking), *reception écrite* (reading), and *production écrite* (writing).

Furthermore, in the field of learning French literature, literary texts also strongly support the development of language skills. By learning French using literary texts, learners will be more familiar with cultures. This French fairytale is a product that has a specific culture, which can be seen from strong moral content with the feel of the elements of French culture in the 17th century. This fairytale represents French culture through the behavior of both characters in the story. Hermeneutic analysis of the behavior discourse, dialogue, monologue, and the narration is carried out in depth to obtain representation description of the whole French culture.

CONCLUSION

Language is related to culture. One can learn culture through language. One's language behavior and moral generally follow certain culture. Therefore, in teaching French language, teachers should understand French culture. Language recognition and cultural awareness will help teachers create comfortable situation. French culture can be taught through literature such as fairytales, texts, movies, eating manners, or taught by the native speakers.

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