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On Associative Meanings of Medicinal Traditional Fruits: A Semantico-Pragmatic Perspective of Local-Cultured Environmental Richness

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Abstract. *This research studies the associative meanings contained in the traditional medicinal fruits found in Indonesia. The object of research is not the benefits of the traditional medicinal fruits to cure any diseases. Instead, the research objective is the associative meanings contained in the traditional medicinal fruits. The perspective used in this research is the semantico-pragmatic theory. The research results show that the names of fruits found in various regions in Indonesia has associative meanings, such as ironic, colloquial, affective, social, and reflective. The associative meanings are found in the traditional medicinal fruits, such as mengkudu, permat, tin, perijano, lanas, kullaling, manggis, maklota-dewa, beramuk, cernai, delima, takokak, and jurak. This research contributes to the following purposes: (1) preserving the local wisdom values found in traditional medicinal fruits; (2) providing socio-cultural documentation of traditional medicinal fruits in various regions in Indonesia; (3) developing the study in the semantico-pragmatic field.*

Keywords: *Associative meanings, medicinal traditional fruits, semantico-pragmatic, natural richness*

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelago consisting of thousands of islands with diverse cultural and social backgrounds. To unite these diverse societies and cultures, the Indonesian language is chosen as a national language over the local vernaculars used in regions in Indonesia [1], [2]. The various manifestations of language as a result of various cultural backgrounds are in line with Sapir and Wolf's perspective that language, culture, and society are interconnected.

The interconnectedness of these three elements is formulated in the strong hypothesis or the weak hypothesis of language and culture. The strong hypothesis says that language is determined by culture, while the weak hypothesis says that language is influenced by culture [3], [4]. The debate over the essential truth between these two hypotheses never ends and each hypothesis has its own justification. For example, in the Javanese culture, there are four variants of "rice", namely *beras* 'husked rice', *padli* 'unhusked rice', *nasi* 'cooked rice', and *dedak* 'rice brans', and many more in other regions in Indonesia [5], [2].

However, in British English and American English, the word to describe rice is just 'rice'. The same thing applies to the words associated with 'coconut' in the Javanese culture, such as the names '*kelapa*', '*kelapa muda*' ('young coconut'), '*kelapa tua*' ('old coconut'), '*manggar*' ('coconut flower'), '*blatal*' ('coconut taro fruit'), '*cengdel*' ('young coconut'), and many more. However, in British English, American English, or Australian English, the word to refer to coconut is 'coconut' [6].

On the other hand, in Eskimo, the word to refer to 'snow' varies, which is not known to anyone living outside the Eskimo who does not know 'snow'. This confirms that language is determined by the society and culture where the language is spoken. The social and cultural components and aspects in a certain region will greatly influence the linguistic manifestation of the language in the region in question [7], [2].

This is a very interesting research topic to explore, not only from etiolinguistic, evolutionary, or anthropological perspectives, but also from the semantico-pragmatic perspective. This research discusses in particular the associative meanings found in the traditional medicinal fruits grown in various regions in Indonesia. The object of research is not the benefits of traditional medicinal fruits, but their associative meanings.

The perspective used in this research is the semantico-pragmatic theory. The theory can be simply said as a transitional theory from semantics which is a part of linguistics, and pragmatics as a field outside of linguistics [8], [9]. Semantics is related to the dimensions of the internal context of language, while pragmatics is related to the dimensions of the external context of language. Semantico-pragmatic research is at the center of the two extremes of science, namely semantics on one side and pragmatics on the other [10].

This semantico-pragmatic perspective research contributes in: (1) preserving the local wisdom values contained in traditional medicinal fruits; (2) providing socio-cultural documentation related to traditional medicines in the form of names of fruits from various regions; (3) developing the study in the semantico-pragmatic field.

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