



# Revealing the Determining Roles of Cybertext Contexts in Socio-Semiotic Multimodal Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

The issue of context in language studies has long been the subject of debates by scientists. Internet technology that is developing very rapidly around linguistics has proven to have major impacts on changing the identity of contexts with unimodal dimensions to cybertext contexts. This study aims to describe the determining roles of cybertext contexts in socio-semiotic multimodal perspective. The research data were utterances containing identities of cybertext contexts. The sources of data were divided into two, namely the substantive and the locational ones. The data collection method applied was an in-depth reading method with note-taking technique. This data collection stage was followed by the data classification stage. This means that research data were ready to be analyzed after being carefully classified and typified. Furthermore, these research data were triangulated. The data analysis applied was the extra-lingual equivalent method. The data analysis and interpretation of the results of data analysis was done by matching the extra-lingual aspects. This study resulted in the findings of five determining roles of cybertext contexts in the delivery of intents, namely (1) the role of the cybertext context as the background of the speech intent; (2) the role of the cybertext context as confirming the essence of the speech intent; (3) the role of the cybertext context as an illustration of speech intent; (4) the role of the cybertext context as a provider of inspiration for delivering speech intent; and (5) the role of the cybertext context as complementary information on the meaning of the speech intent.

**Keywords:** *Cybertext contexts, Cyberpragmatics, Multimodality perspective, Socio-semiotics.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The field of pragmatics has long been understood to be the youngest branch of linguistics. Pragmatics as a field of science focuses on the study of speaker intent (Rahardi, 2019). The speaker's intention in pragmatic studies is also commonly referred to as pragmatic meaning. Pragmatic meaning has a contrasting meaning with linguistic meaning or semantic meaning which is an internal study of linguistics (Chen & Yang, 2010; Mao, 2003). The pragmatic meaning or the speaker's intention can be obtained by interpreting the speech in a context-bound manner. This means that context cannot be ignored in interpreting the speaker's intent. Ignoring the context in interpreting the speaker's intention will present ambiguity.

The interpretation of intent must be based on extralinguistic contexts, both conventional external contexts and virtual external contexts. The study of pragmatics differs from the study of linguistics because the focus of pragmatic attention is on the speaker's

meaning or context-bound intentions as stated above. In the findings of Rahardi, the extralinguistic context in pragmatic studies can include four types, namely social context, societal context, cultural context, and situational context. Each type of context presented above is interrelated, and each type of context has conventional and virtual dimensions in every aspect of its context elements (Allan, 2007; Rahardi, 2020).

Along with the development of technology, the extralinguistic context shifted from the conventional, virtual, to cybertext (DeWaard, 2012). The presence of the cybertext context is also accompanied by a change in the paradigm of language studies from the original monomodality, bimodality, then now turning into multimodality (Haider, 2019; Sari, 2018)

In the perspective of language studies with multimodality dimensions, the cybertext context has five facets, namely visual, spatial, gestural, aural, and linguistic (Leeuwen, 2005; Kress, 1990). The essence of the five facets of the cybertext context is the linguistic dimension. The reason is that the speaker's intention or

pragmatic meaning is mainly conveyed through verbal language. The other aspects function as supporting the delivery of the main purpose carried out through the linguistic vehicle.

Furthermore, related to the study of pragmatics, the youngest field of linguistics continues to develop from systemic pragmatics, general pragmatics, culture-specific pragmatics, and now cyberpragmatics (Locher, 2013). This latest development occurs as a result of the rapid development of technology and information and the internet in linguistics.

The presence and involvement of technology and information and the internet in linguistics makes pragmatic research data and data sources not only in the form of natural human utterances, but also shifts to other interrelated modes (Kecskes, 2012). This fact is also in line with Halliday's functional systemic linguistic perspective which is based on the socio-semiotic facts of language (Halliday, 1978).

In this expert's view, the use of language always has a social and social metaphorical environment. Therefore, language cannot be separated from the social-social dimension (Kramsch, 2002). The social dimension of language has both vertical and horizontal characteristics and all of them systemically imply linguistic semiotic symbols. It should also be emphasized that cyberpragmatics with data and data sources obtained from the internet cannot be separated from the virtual extralinguistic context initiated by Rahardi (2021).

The elements of the conventional extralinguistic context shift and change as a result of the development of information technology and the internet (Orsini-Jones et al., 2017). Another thing that is also a consequence of the changes and shifts due to information technology and the internet is that the concept of talkative community or social community has now shifted to a virtual community as has been emphasized by Yus (2019).

The paradigm shift in language studies has also changed from being formalistic to functionalistic, now shifting to being functionalistic and post-functional (Aveling, 2005; Jaszczolt, 2018). This is related to the idea of Leeuwen in multimodality. In their perspective, functionally language must be interpreted by involving various contexts in the form of visual, audio, spatial, aural, and linguistic aspects. These five aspects all symbolize meaning which in systemic functional linguistics is called social semiotics (van Leeuwen, 2005).

Based on the background explanation and problem identification above, this research problem is formulated as follows: What are the determinant roles of cybertext context in determining the speaker's intention in a multimodality perspective? In line with the formulation of the problem, the purpose of this study is to describe the

determinant role of the cybertext context in determining the speaker's intent in a multimodality perspective.

## 2. METHOD

This research uncovered the cybertext context as the determinant role of the speaker's intent in this multimodal perspective used a qualitative descriptive approach (Mahsun, 2005). The data of this research were in the form of a cybertext context in a multimodality perspective which contained the determinant role of the speaker's intent obtained around the time of the implementation of this research (Wodak, 2007). The source of the substantive data of this research were excerpts of texts from online media which contain cybertext context. The source of locational data was social media texts that contained cybertext context.

Taking into account the limitations of the implementation of this study, the researcher limited the amount of data. However, the principle of data sufficiency is still fulfilled (Sudaryanto, 2016). It should also be noted that the source of the substantive data for this research is excerpts of cyber texts from social media with multimodal dimensions.

The data collection method used is the read-note method. The data analysis method used is the contextual method. The steps in carrying out this research are presented as follows: identification, classification, interpretation, and description (de Vaus, 2001). Based on all of that, the research on the role of determining the context of the cybertext in interpreting the speaker's intent was carried out.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research has produced findings in the form of five determinants of the cybertext context in interpreting the speaker's intent, namely: (1) the role of the cybertext context as the background of the speech intent; (2) the role of the cybertext context as confirming the essence of the speech intent; (3) the role of the cybertext context as an illustration of speech intent; (4) the role of the cybertext context as a provider of inspiration for delivering speech intent; and (5) the role of the cybertext context as complementary information on the meaning of the speech intent. These decisive roles can be seen through three illustrations with multimodality dimensions as presented below.



Figure 1 POND'S cosmetics advertisement.

### ***3.1. The Role of Cybertext Context as the Background of Speech Meaning***

The function of the cybertext context as the background of the speech intention can be explained through the illustration in Figure 1 with a multimodality perspective. Dominantly, picture 1 which contains the POND'S cosmetic advertisement uses written language as the main tool for conveying its meaning. The linguistic forms which read, 'TRIPLE GLOW SERUM', followed by the linguistic forms 'bright, soft, moist', and the linguistic form '60x vitamin C' indicate that the main message of this advertisement is actually contained in these three linguistic forms. First, the entity that I want to emphasize is that POND'S has the power of being a 'three-dimensional facial brightening serum. It is not just a 'double' but more than a 'double' or two, that is, three.

This is also supported by three keywords for facial brightness due to the use of POND'S, namely 'bright, soft, and moist'. It is clear that the face with the characteristics of the three things presented in front is the dream of every woman so that she always looks beautiful. The third linguistic entity is '60x vitamin C'. This would like to emphasize that the efficacy of POND'S is 60X more than just vitamin C which is known to be very good for brightening the face. The meaning conveyed by linguistic means in the three manifestations as mentioned above is still supported by other aspects of multimodality as the background for conveying the intention.

From the visual aspect, it is clear that Wendy's commercial star has a really bright and charming face. From a visual perspective, the pink color and the combination of writing and coloring that are unique to women, as shown in the photo, are clearly the background for conveying this meaning perfectly. From the spatial dimension, the placement of writing, fonts, cosmetic illustrations, etc., the background of conveying that intent very well.

It is evident that the role of the first context that needs to be conveyed here is the role as a background for conveying the meaning of the utterance. Pragmatics learning in the perspective of cyberpragmatics in the integration of multimodality-based cybertext contexts must pay attention to data and data sources as presented in front of it (Locher, 2013; van Leeuwen, 2005).

### ***3.2. The Role of Cybertext Context as Confirming the Essence of Speech Meaning***

The next role of the cybertext context from the POND'S cosmetic advertisement in Figure 1 is as a confirmation of the essence of the speech intent. Once again, it needs to be emphasized that the speech intention is first conveyed through linguistic vehicles in three manifestations, namely 'TRIPLE GLOW SERUM', 'bright, soft, moist', and '60x vitamin C.' As stated above,

from a multimodality perspective, it is not considered sufficient. Other entities that are visual, spatial, gestural, and aural are very helpful in confirming the seriousness of the effort to convey meaning through the language vehicle.

Let us take the example of the visual dimension with the appearance of a beautiful artist Wendy's face. Her extraordinary beauty and looks from her soft, bright, and soft-out face emphasize the meaning conveyed by the linguistic entity 'bright, soft, moist' accompanied by an illustration of a cosmetic bottle on the right side. It shows that the selection of the face of the beautiful artist is not without purpose, but actually with the intention, namely as a form of confirming the delivery of speech intent.

Likewise, the illustrations of writings with varied fonts, the coloration of the advertising background are very beautiful and charming, all of which are aimed at confirming the meaning of delivery which is carried out by using linguistic vehicles (Science et al., 2017) as the trend of communication that occurs in the era of technology as it is today. The meaning of speech cannot be interpreted only by interpreting the speech linguistically (Rahardi, 2020).

In line with the understanding of the nature of language as social semiotics, namely that language is always present with its context, both metaphorical and naturalistic, the purpose of speech in advertisements must also be interpreted by interpreting the cybertext contexts that accompany the linguistic conveying of the intent (Gerbig, 2003).

Pragmatics in the past in the dimensions of monomodality and bimodality have not yet reached the meaning of the demands mentioned above. Cybertext-based pragmatics, which is currently only developing, accommodates this reality and is now a demand to understand linguistic meanings with increasingly complex language vehicles and cybertext contexts (Yeh & Swinehart, 2020).

### ***3.3. The Role of Cybertext Context as Illustration of Speech Meaning***

This research has also found the third role of cybertext context, namely as an illustration of conveying the meaning of speech. In addition to the purpose of the speech that is conveyed with the main vehicle of language, the purpose of the speech can also be assisted by the presence of illustrations that provide illustrations or descriptions of something that is being conveyed as the main message. So if in the past, it was enough to interpret the meaning of the speech by understanding its semantic or linguistic meaning, now this is not the case. The dimensions of the context are not only social and social, cultural and situational, but also must be accompanied by the dimensions of the context that are cybertext.

Cybertext context in the form of gestural context, spatial context, aural context, and others. In relation to the image presented in front of it, the context of the cybertext acts as an illustration of the delivery of the speech intent. The ad above contains the following linguistic dimension, 'KEEP YOUR ENDURANCE AT FULL ACTIVITY'. So that is actually the main message to be conveyed through this advertising vehicle. The pictures of the figures behind the linguistic utterances are four people, all of whom show a certain enthusiasm in their activities.

Even though the atmosphere is hot and sultry as illustrated in the background of the picture, it is clear that by taking a vitamin supplement called 'Pharmaton', everyone will remain enthusiastic in completing activities. The images presented as illustrations are also not limited to the figures of the perpetrators of the activities as presented above. The illustration that contains multi vitamins, namely vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin D, and others shows that these entities illustrate the conveying of meaning as described by the linguistic vehicle in front of it. Cyberpragmatics learning based on cybertext contexts like this is very important to do for students.

The era of abundance that is now experienced by all citizens of the world allows language researchers, especially cyberpragmatics to wallow in data. However, the abundant data and data sources must be studied using relevant theories, theories that are continuously developed by modern-minded experts, not conventional ones and difficult to change and difficult to develop (Jay & Janschewitz, 2008). Only in this way can language research, especially cyberpragmatics, be said to be progressing towards success.

### **3.4. The Role of Cybertext Context as a Provider of Inspiration for Conveying Meaning**

The fourth finding is related to the role of cybertext context in cyberpragmatics as a provider of inspiration in conveying the meaning of speech. Inspiration in conveying the meaning and interpreting the meaning of speech often cannot be present if there is no proper illustration. So the function of illustration in the form of images, spacing of writing, fonts, coloring, sound, and the like can be aimed at providing inspiration for speakers and speech partners in communicating (Mondada, 2018). In various social media, data and data sources that are cybertext are all intended to provide inspiration as stated above. The creations and innovations of the messengers are also extraordinary because social media is usually used by young people and those who are young at heart. So it is not surprising that the illustrations presented are very inspiring and very diverse.



**Figure 2** Vitamin supplement advertisement.

In Figure 2, the role of the inspiration provider is depicted by the presence of four figures who appear prime and seem to be discussing a plan. They are ready to do something even if it is hot and sweltering outside. Likewise, the illustration of a Pharmaton box containing multivitamins inspires someone who wants to express and interpret the meaning of speech related to the substance of the speech conveyed through linguistic vehicles. Thus, the meaning of the form 'KEEP ENDURANCE WHEN FULL ACTIVITY' is assisted by the presence of illustrations that are multimodal in nature so that meaning becomes easy. In the past, illustrations of this kind were never present. The speaker's intention is traditionally conveyed in monomodality through language vehicles.

In the days before the presence of cyberpragmatics, the meaning of speech was more bimodal. The context has indeed been played, but its new nature, conventional external has not yet reached the virtual one, let alone the cybertext. The development of context studies towards a multimodality-based cybertext context occurs because of changes in language and its context which are related to technology (Andrea & Ágnes, 2019). If in many ways, technology develops and changes everything, in pragmatic studies it is the same. Technology has guided the study of pragmatics from a general and conventional nature to a cyber nature which is called cyberpragmatics.

### **3.5. The Role of Cybertext Context as Complementary Information on Interpreting the Speech Meaning**

Furthermore, it should be stated that this research has succeeded in finding the fifth role of the cybertext context, namely the role as complementary information on the meaning of the speaker's intent. In Figure 3, there are a number of main messages conveyed through the language vehicle, namely 'HEMAT PANGKAL FUN', 'Friends of the Red Date', and 'DISKON s.d. Rp. 800k' in various fonts. Thus, it can be emphasized that the main message of communication in cyberpragmatics is not conveyed through image, visual, aural, or other aspects



**Figure 3** Traveloka advertisement.

of cybertext context, but through linguistic vehicles or ordinary language vehicles.

Illustrations of pictures of people who are full of joy in enjoying their holidays are actually part of the cybertext context whose purpose is to provide complete information for conveying the meaning of the speech. The choice of the phrase 'Friends, Dates, Red' is also a separate strategy to make the nuances of this advertisement more interesting because it is very closely related to 'traveloka' as a vehicle for finding hotels and tourist attractions and their packages during holidays or on red dates in the calendar.

The skill of a messenger as shown in the tour package advertisements as presented in front has proven to be very important in attracting tourists. So it is very clear that the cybertext context entities outside of linguistics as stated above have a role as complementary information in conveying the meaning of the utterance. Cyberpragmatics in a multimodality perspective can be used to analyze data and data sources as presented above appropriately (Haider, 2019).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, it can be emphasized that the five roles that determine the context of cybertext in determining speech intent have been identified through the implementation of this research. The five determining roles are presented as follows: (1) the role of the cybertext context as the background of the speech intent; (2) the role of the cybertext context as confirming the essence of the speech intent; (3) the role of the cybertext context as an illustration of speech intent; (4) the role of the cybertext context as a provider of inspiration for delivering speech intent; and (5) the role of the cybertext context as complementary information on the meaning of the speech intent. In a more comprehensive research it will be possible to find more determining roles. Thus, this research needs to be followed up with broader research. Similar researchers are invited to carry out similar research and to investigate this issue. The findings of this study have a very significant contribution to the development of pragmatics, especially those that are

related to technology and have multimodality dimensions.

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