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How Indonesian sees the colors: Natural semantic metalanguage theory

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ABSTRACT

This research explores basic and secondary colors in Indonesia. This research attempts to explicate the meaning of colors by using the semantic theory of Natural Semantic Metalanguage Theory. This research applied qualitative method. The paradigm of qualitative research revolves around the observation from the surrounding. The data were collected from various sources such as Indonesian Dictionary, Indonesian Corpus, and the data created by the researcher as the native speaker. The researcher explicates primary or basic colors as well as the secondary. Further, these Indonesian colors were being explicated by applying the features of Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM). The colors in Indonesian were gathered and classified. The researcher then analyzed the colors based on the explication of NSM theory and the approach of Basic Color Term initiated by Berlin and Kay. This research discovers that the basic or primary colors in Indonesian are Black, White, Red, Yellow, Green and Blue. The application of this research is apparently vivid in the advancement of colors study in the realm of semantics. This research also exposes the difference of explication in English and Indonesian. This occurred due to the difference of the usage of semantic atom to explain the meaning of color. To explicate the color of black, Indonesian uses charcoal. Meanwhile English uses the night sky. In Indonesian, colors that come after Green and Blue according to Berlin and Kay's color terms are Brown, Purple, Orange, Pink, and Grey are not basics but secondary colors. Meanwhile, in English the aforementioned colors are basics.

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The discussion of colors in semantics is almost ignored and taken for granted despite the sheer usage of colors in the culture and language. This is in line with Kennedy (2008) when they said that colors is very much overlooked in the context of semantic discussion. Regarding to that, it is also believed that in some parts of Indonesia, yellow is considered a sacred color in the societies of Malay Peninsula (Rao, 2019), meanwhile black and grey is the most dominant culture for people in East Nusa Tenggara. These colors signify their cultural identities mostly seen in their traditional fabrics and attires. The questions arise whether the meaning of color is perceived universally or distinguishably? Does the yellow color in Malay culture signifies the same signifier in English? Does Bataknese and Javanese society perceive black mutually? If colors are perceived differently in different languages and culture, what semantics construction can be applied to distinguish the differences? These questions eventually reflect the objectives of this research that is to investigate the meaning of color in Bahasa Indonesia through the perspective of semantics.

This research applies the theory of Natural Semantics Metalanguage (MSA) to meticulously apprehend the meaning behind every color in Bahasa Indonesia. The diversity of Indonesian culture has become the prime reason to say that color is distinguished in every culture and language. This is in line with Wierzbicka's (2006) statement that there are some cultures and languages don't recognize the concept of colors. Bulmer (1968) in Wierzbicka (2008) revealed in his in-dept research that some languages in Australia, Papua New Guinea and Africa have no concept of color. This finding is also strengthened by the further research of Hargrave (1982) which concluded that there are five Aboriginal languages in Australia that denotes colors with the concept of light and dark only. Therefore, the research questions are: 1). How are colors in Indonesia explicated? And, 2) What are the semantic primes used to explicate colors in Indonesian?

Colors have attracted some linguists and anthropologist to delve into the meaning and its function in the language. Saphir and Worf (1939) in Kay & Kempton (1984) conducted the research on color by using Linguistics Relativity Theory. This research discovered that no countries in the world have the same construction of social reality and culture. When it is brought to the discussion of vocabulary of color in 1920 until 1960's, Saphir opinioned that if blue doesn't exist in a certain language, it doesn't mean that there is no concept of blue color in that language or they don't have any cognition about the blue color.

Current researches about colors in the area of semantics revolve around the idiomatic and metaphor meaning. Ayesa (2021) conducted a study about the basic meaning of basic color terms in Indonesian and Mandarin.

This research excludes the explication of the color in order to figure out the common ground in meaning within the two languages even though in its premises it applies NSM theory. Dewa & Wijana (2015) revealed the metaphor meaning in Indonesian and English and found the similarities between them. Lapasau (2019) compared metaphorical meaning between Indonesia and German language and found that metaphorical meaning is instilled in neutral and primary colors in both languages. Xing (2009) figured out that even though the semantic process of colors in Mandarin is aligned with the application of (Berlin B. and Kay P, 1969) theory but eventually basic color terms in Mandarin have extended meaning.

Further, the research about color focuses on metaphor is conducted by (Indra, 2018) that analyzed semantic metaphor in Minangkabau and found that there are 6 colors that contain metaphorical expressions such as *itam* (black), *putiah* (white), *kelabu*, (grey), *sirah* (red), *kunyiang*, (yellow) and *ijau* (green). Lai & Chung (2018) revealed that Taiwanese Mandarin mostly uses color expression of black and white, followed by Southern Min's Mandarin and Hakka's Mandarin. Hamilton (2016) in his dissertation analyzed the metonymy and metaphor in English and discovered that the use of colors in figurative language is derived from metonymy and is eventually developed into the metaphor process. (Al-rasheed, 2014) did research on colors in Arabic based on the principles of Berlin and Kay's basic color terms. He figured out that there are 11 basic colors in Arabic and found out that light blue and dark blue are not listed as basic color terms in Arabic.

Massive research on color ever conducted in America continent was initiated by MacLaury (1997-2011) to map the category of color by interviewing 900 speakers from 116 Meso- American languages. The respondents were asked to name the colors, select the color focus and map the color by using Munshell Color Set.

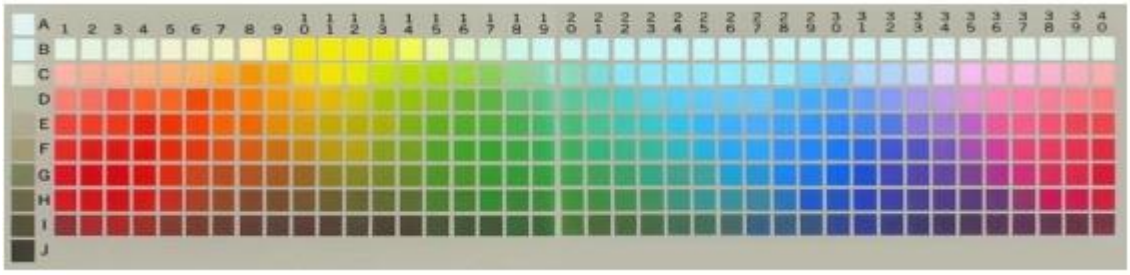

Figure 1: World's color survey, Munshell color chart

1. In order to name the color, the respondents were asked to point a color card randomly and name the color. Color range further was marked in no particular order.

2. Next step, the respondents were asked to choose the focus (the best example) from every chosen or used color.
3. Last step, respondents were exposed by the arranged set of colors without the range of naming and were asked to indicate every card of color they referred by using specific terminologies.

The concept of colors is not universal. Therefore, Berlin B. and Kay P (1969) initiated to find the common ground and concept of basic color terms in some languages by applying following principles:

1. *Monolexemic*
   The color must be mono lexical and not derived from other entities. Example: Black or White.
2. *Exclusive*
   The color must not include another color or term. Example: *Merah Jambu* (Pink) is not basic color in Indonesian because it refers to another entity.
3. *Unrestricted*
   The colocation of colors is not restricted. Examples: Pirang (blonde) can only be paired or collocated with hair. Therefore, it is not basic color.
4. *Salient*
   The color must be salient for the respondent.

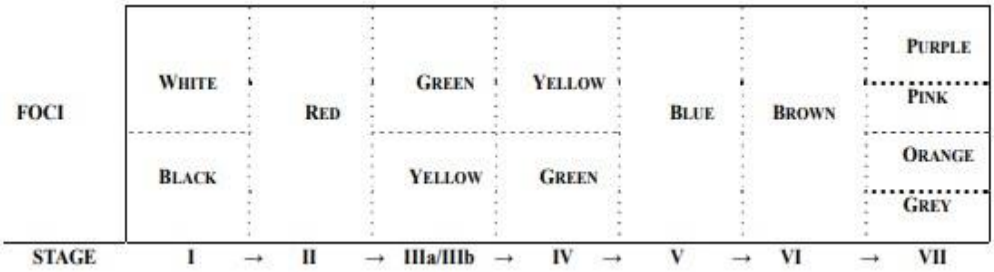

Figure 2. Berlin and Kay's hierarchy of basic color.

Based on the figure above, Berlin and Kay argue that every language in the world at least possesses black and white color shown in the left most of the figure. This means that if a language has basic color in the right most of the figure, it is assured that it possesses the basic colors in the left. For example, if a language has yellow as the basic color, then red, white, and black also belong to the basic colors of that language. Wierzbicka (1996) once criticized (Kay & McDaniel, 1978) that argue color is the result of neurophysiological process that emphasizes on the light's wavelength that touches the eyes and transforms it to as the response of visual neuro system. According to her, the concept of color has been instilled in universal human's experiences like experiencing day and night, seeing fire, sun, vegetation, sky and the ground. This has become the empirical foundation of Natural Semantic Metalanguage initiated by Wierzbicka to prove that even though not

every language has the term of color but every language has semantic prime for 'seeing'. Wierzbicka (2008) highlights the importance of writing the right explication of 'color'

a. people can know many kinds of things about some things, this is one of these kinds
b. when people see some things, they can know something of this kind about them if they can see them well
c. if someone wants to say something because they want someone else to know something of this kind about something
they have to say something like this about some places at some times: 'people can see something like this when they see these places at these times'

Wierzbicka (1990) explicated the concept of red which is not found in of the Aboriginal languages in Australia by using natural semantic metalanguage explication:

X is red
when one sees things like X one can think of the blood
at sometimes people can see everything
when one sees things like X one can think of times of this kind

The assumption of the explication above is that the concept of red is based on blood or even fire. But, the explication above has no claim that red is equal to blood or fire is red. The above explication only claims that there is conceptual relationship between red and blood, or red and fire. This relationship is also related with people's experience when they see blood and when they sometimes see fire. The synthesis from the explanation above is that the concept of color is very much juxtaposed with the culture and language. However, not every language has the word for color. Eventually, the concept of color revolves around the area of light and dark. The language which has no color concept usually refers and relates colors with the things such as the sky, the vegetation and the ground.

Natural Semantic Metalanguage introduces some theoretical principles in order to comprehend the Semantic Prime. Semantic prime is the set of meaning that can't be paraphrased in simpler terms and doesn't change because it is inherited to human since they were born (Goddard, 2008). This meaning is the reflection of the basic most of human mind. Semantic primitive can be explicated from the deep structure which is the only way to represent the meaning (Wierzbicka, 1996). The explication in meaning is obliged to insert the meaning of words intuitively connected to the same focus of meaning and those meanings are being analyzed based on their components. A set of semantic primes is expected to explicate the complex meaning to be simpler. Wierzbicka (1996) and Goddard (1997) argue that it is impossible to define all words and if we want to define a definition, some words are

required. Goddard (2010) found 61 semantic primes which are universal and applicable ever language in the world:

	I, YOU, SOMEONE,
	SOMETHING, PEOPLE,
Substantives	BODY
	KIND OF, PART
Relation Substantives	OF
	THIS, THE SAME,
Determiners	OTHER
	ONE, TWO, ALL,
Quantifiers	MANY/MUCH, SOME
	BIG, SMALL,
Attributes	GOOD, BAD
Intensifiers	VERY
	WANT, FEEL, THINK,
Mental Predicates	KNOW, SEE, HEAR
	SAY, WORDS,
Speech	TRUE
	DO, HAPPEN,
Actions, events, movements	MOVE
	THERE IS,
Existence and possessive	HAVE
Life and death	LIVE, DIE
	NOT, MAYBE, CAN,
Logical concepts	BECAUSE, IF
	WHEN, NOW, AFTER, BEFORE, A LONG TIME, A SHORT TIME,
Time	FOR SOME TIME, MOMENT
	WHERE, HERE, ABOVE, BELOW, NEAR, FAR, INSIDE, SIDE,
Space	TOUCHING (CONTACT)
Augmentor	MORE
	LIKE (HOW,
Similarity	AS)

METHOD

This research applied qualitative method. The paradigm of qualitative research revolves around the observation from the surrounding. Therefore, this research mainly came from the phenomena occurred in the society. The data were derived from various sources such as official Indonesian dictionary, Indonesian corpus, or data created by the researcher as the native speaker. The researcher conducted by applying library research in order to investigate the primary data. According to George (2008) library research needs no respondents or informants because the research itself that will identify and define the data. Bogdan and Taylor (1992) also mention that the researcher can mold descriptive data that eventually could be utilized as the complement

of the information in order to explain the social phenomena. The data were obtained purposively (Hadi, 2004), by selecting basic color terms and secondary colors in Indonesian. The steps taken from various sources and classified into basic colors and secondary colors. After classifying the data, the data were being explicated or paraphrased to figure out the semantic atoms applied in this research. The researcher applied the theory of Natural Semantic Metalanguage of Wierzbicka (2008) that exemplifies that colors have never been universal concepts. The data are valid and reliable because they were derived from the Indonesian Corpus.

FINDINGS

Indonesia is a culturally and linguistically diverse nation. Based on the finding of this research, the researcher claims that Indonesian has 6 basic colors that is: Black, White, Red, Yellow, Green and Blue. This finding means that the concept of colors in Indonesia is overlooked and taken for granted. We always believe that colors are what we are seeing. It turns out that colors have meaning just beyond what most people think.

According to Berlin and Kay, basic color must be monolexemic, exclusive, unrestricted, and salient. Based on these features, brown (*cokelat*) is not basic color in Indonesian because it contains a specific thing which is chocolate. Therefore, it is considered as non-exclusive because it refers to another entity. The color of purple (*ungu*) is also not a basic color in Indonesian because it is the combination of red and blue. This means that this color is not exclusive. Pink (*merah jambu*) is excluded from Indonesian's basic colors because it contains more than one lexeme as basic color term must be monolexemic. It also contains another entity. Therefore, it is not an exclusive color. Orange is not a basic color term in Indonesian because it also refers to another entity which is the color of orange. Grey (*abu-abu)* is also excluded from Indonesia's basic color term because it consists of more than one lexeme. Therefore, according to Berlin and Key's hierarchy of basic colors, Indonesian basic colors are White, Black, Red, Yellow, Green and Blue. Meanwhile, basic colors in English are White, Black, Red, Yellow, Green, Blue, Brown, Purple, Pink, and Grey.

The rest of the colors in Indonesia such as Magenta (*merah keunguan*), Maroon, (*merah marun*), Ruby (*merah delima*), Fuchsia (*merah muda terang*), Crimson (*merah tua terang*), Carmine (*merah tua*), Burgundy *(merah anggur*), Hot Pink (*merah muda terang*), Brick Red (*merah bata*), Coral (*merah kekuning-kuningan*), Aquamarine (*biru laut*), Cyan (*biru terang*), Sapphire (*biru nilam*), Teal (*biru hijau*), Ultramarine (*lazuardi*), Red lead (*sedelinggam*), Royal blue (*nilakandi*), Navy Blue (*biru tua*), Indigo (*nila*), Gold (*emas*), Silver (*perak*), Amber (*kuning sawo*), Rosewood (*kuning kemerahan*), Khaki (*kuning kecoklatan)*, Salmon (*bang bang*), Verdigris (*kerak terusi*), Violet (violet), Orange Chrome

(*mambang kuning*), Orange Red (*dewangga)*, Ochre (*hartal*), Apricot (*pinggala*), Orchid (*ungu terang*), Dark Purple (*ijas*), Lavender (*gandaria*) Mauve (*lembayung muda*), Lilac (*lila*), Cerise (*jingga muda*), Dun (t*urangga*), Emerald (*hijau zamrud*), Jade (*hijau lumut*), Lime *(hijau limau*), Greenish White (*Nusaindah*), Pistachio (*hijau kekuningan*), Deep Turquoise (*Indranila*), Dun *(turangga*), Copper (*warna tembaga*), Cinnamon (*cokelat kemerah-merahan*), Amethyst (*kecubung*), Indigo (*nila*), Light Brown (*soga,*), Bay (*kapisa*), Chesnut (*kadru*), Beige (*abu-abu kecoklatan*), Ebony (*hitam gelap*), Iron Grey (*Kelam baja*), Ivory (*putih gading*), Swan White (*kinantan*), Raven Black (*cemani*), Neutral Grey (*saliwah*), Taupe (*kelabu tua*) are all secondary colors.

Basic Colors Explication in Indonesian and English

X is black (Indonesian) =
when one sees things like X one can think of the charcoal
X is black (English) =
(a) at some times people can see the sky above them
when one sees things like X one can think of the night sky at these times
(b) in some places there are pupils in peoples' eyes
when people see these eyes, they can see these pupils
when one sees things like X one can think of this

X is white (Indonesian) =
(a) at some times people can see the cotton tree
when one sees things like X one can think of the cotton at these times
(b) in some places there are eggs
when people see these eggs, they can see these eggs white
when one sees things like X one can think of this
X is white (English) =
(a) at some times people can see something falling from the sky
when one sees things like X one can think of the snow
(b) in some places there are animals of one kind
Sometimes they have this, when people see this animal, they can see this milk
when one sees things like X one can think of this

X is red (Indonesian and English) =
When one sees things like X one can think of the blood.
X is red (English) =
(a)When one sees things like X one can think of fire
(b) At sometimes people can see something grow from ground
When people see this X from the ground, they can see tomatoes

X is yellow (Indonesian) =
(a) At sometimes people can see something grow from ground
When people see this X from the ground, they can see turmeric
(b) When one sees things like X one can think of the gold.
X is yellow (English)
(a) At sometimes people can see the sky above them
When people see this X from the sky, they can see sun
(b) At the sometimes people can see something grow from the ground
When people see this X from the ground, they can see olive
(c) in some places there are eggs
When people see these eggs, they can see these yolks
When one sees things like X one can think of this.

X is green (Indonesian)
(a)At sometimes people can see something grow from the ground
When people see this X from the ground, they can see leaf
X is green (English)
(a) At sometimes people can see something grow from the ground
When people see this X from the ground, they can see plants

X is blue (Indonesian and English)
At sometimes people can see the sky above them
When one sees things like X one can think of the blue sky at these times

Explication of Secondary Colors in Indonesian

Secondary colors are basically the combination of red, yellow, green, and blue and in some occasions are the combination of white and black. The color of red, yellow, green and blue are also called as unitary hue. Hurvich & Jameson (1957) also argues that these colors are paramount in creating other colors. According to the sequence of Berlin B. and Kay P (1969), secondary colors are those that come after the blue color; brown, purple, pink, orange, and grey. Brown is the combination of black and yellow or in some contexts is the combination of black and red. Orange is the combination of yellow and red. Pink is the combination of red and white. Purple is the combination of blue and red, meanwhile grey is the combination of black and white. In English, these secondary colors are listed in level 6 and 7. Meanwhile in Indonesian, these colors are not basic colors. Brown isn't basic color because it contains another entity while being referred. If brown isn't capable to fill the requirement of basic color in one language, either other color follow after it. The following explications are applied for secondary colors in both languages Indonesian and English:
X is Orange:

(a). One can think something is like X
(b). This X is like something which is yellow
(c). At sometimes one can think: this is something like red

X is Pink:
(a). One can think something is like X
(b). This X is like something which is red
(c). At sometimes one can think: this is something like white

X is Grey:
(a). One can think something is like X
(b). This X is like something which is black
(c). At sometimes one can think: this is something like white

X is Purple:
(a). One can think something is like X
(b). This X is like something which is red
(c). At sometimes one can think: this is something like blue

X is Brown:
(a). One can think something is like X
(b). This X is like something which is yellow
(c). At sometimes one can think: this is something like red

DISCUSSION

Indonesian refers to charcoal to explain the concept of black. This concept is very universal in Indonesian society as charcoal is being used in household's utilities. Despite it is a common concept in Indonesian, in other languages in the world charcoal might not be recognized. The previous researches might delve into the metaphor meanings of colors. Therefore, it might be very different from one culture to another. This research is the one significant and important resource for linguists who are interested in investigating colors particularly in Indonesia from the perspective of NSM theory pioneered by Wierzbicka (2006). The signature of this research relies on the usage of NSM theory in order to give a comprehension concept of colors in semantic realms. Previous researches about colors in Indonesia don't touch the area of semantic primes to explicate colors, instead use metaphor theories. Therefore, the researcher is confident that this research could eventually rise to the discussion of colors by using NSM theory.

Based on the explications above, it can be concluded that Indonesian and English use different concepts to explain the color of black. Indonesian affirms that 'charcoal' is the best way to denote black. Meanwhile English

utilizes some concepts to give meaning to black. Night sky and pupils are the chosen concepts. Indonesian uses charcoal because it is a product of culture in the society passed on through generations. People in Indonesia use charcoal mainly for the source of energy. Meanwhile in English, black is associated with the natural phenomenon and human's body part. This indicates that the experiences and observation from the speaker of both languages to explicate the color of black is very much different. In a local culture like Mandailing, Black is also a basic color, but what is lacking in the research conducted by Amalia (2022) is that her explication about colors didn't apply the semantic atom. She didn't pursue more to explicate the possibility of how Mandailing societies perceive black as one of the basic colors because a color needs to be contextualized.

There is a staggering difference between the results of Amalia (2022) and (Budiono, 2018) and shows that (Wierzbicka, 1999) opinion about the specific concept of color in many languages which must be different is valid. She believes that the sheer difficulty of naming the color because the difference of cultures translated to the process of seeing is very contextualized. Therefore, in order to comprehend the color explication from the perspective of semantics, cultural and conceptual elements comprehension are required together with understanding the use of semantic primes.

Indonesian refers to the cotton and egg white to explicate the color of white. Cotton in Indonesia doesn't represent white in another language. Due to the cultural differences and conceptualized meaning, white is denoted differently in language like English. Indonesian also uses egg white to explicate the color of white because it is the reference that Indonesian familiar with in the daily life. White possesses many semiotic meanings in Indonesia like clarity, purity even successfulness. This is also supported by the finding of Fauzi et al. (2021) that sought the meaning of colors in Sundanese by using Semantics Metaphor approach. Even though they didn't apply NSM theory instead elaborated color through metaphor theory, the result of the research has given more perspective on giving broader meaning on color.

The concept of white in English is utterly different. The approach for English speaker to define white is connected with natural phenomenon that is observable to the British. Snow is being coded to represent white. This can be explained by the fact that England and America as the two biggest English-speaking nations have snowy weather in the winter. This has been a very pivotal natural phenomenon for the English speakers in these two countries. Snow has an immense influence on these English speakers since snow has always been associated with Christmas. Meanwhile milk is provided in every British and American table for breakfast.

Indonesian opts cotton to represent the color of white because Indonesia is a tropical country that is the habitat for cotton trees and traditionally has a long history of weaving cotton into clothes. Egg white is also used to decode white because Indonesians are very familiar with this as the source to fulfil nutrition. Speaking of this, the whiteness of milk and eggs, cotton and snow might have been in different spectrum in both languages. Therefore, the associations of white in these two languages must also be different.

Indonesian and English denote red color with something which is familiar with human body. That is blood. But English varies the reference with fire and tomatoes. The interesting part is the cognitive role plays an important part to comprehend color in every language. The color of red containing in blood, fire or even tomatoes must be different. This is also in accordance with Liebniz (1985) in Wierzbicka (1990) which stipulates that the concept of color is something unexplainable except by seeing it. Frumkina (1984) in (Wierzbicka (1990) also mentions about linguistics conscience which emphasizes on defining the colors. Based on the report of the research, to define the color of pink in Russia, many informants state that pink is the color of red which shows a very bright red. Meanwhile, some say that pink only shows a slightly bright color. Therefore, the knowledge and the way humans express their cognitive and linguistic performance and abilities are different.

Benczes & Tóth-Czifra (2014) conducted research on two types of red in Hungarian: Piros and Voros. They attempted to explicate the meaning of colors semantically by adding noun properties after the colors *(piros* + noun) and (*voros* + noun). The research discovered that piros is mostly paired with vegetation, fruits and body parts. *Voros* in the other side is mostly used in figurative language. The research mentioned earlier has been a solid example that color and its meaning is very much related with association process. This situation also occurs in some languages in Indonesia like in Sundanese. The color of red Sundanese is associated with the attributes from the nature such as *merah ati* (maroon) and *merah cabe rawit* (red chili) (Yulianti, 2016).

Basic color like yellow, green, and blue are frequently used in the culture of Indonesian societies. In Minangkabau language, the color of red, yellow, and green are classified as basic colors (Indra, 2018). Meanwhile in Madura Language, red, yellow, and color are also categorized as basic colors, but with blue which is exceptionally used to represent blue and green (Fadhilah et al., 2019). In Balinese, besides black, white, red, yellow and green, purple is also classified as basic color due to its frequent usage in many connotation of the language (Diputra, 2017).

Indonesian denotes the color of yellow with the semantic atom of turmeric. This is a solid statement as what Hargrave in (Roberson et al., 2000) has conducted to investigate one of the languages in Papua that is Dani

language. This research reveals that Dani Tribe only recognizes 3 colors, one of them is yellow that functions to denote the harvest of the nature like turmeric. Gold is also denoted to address yellow in Indonesian as the semantic atom. Even amongst Indonesians acknowledge that difference of yellow in turmeric and gold is very vivid and unique to one and another but these associations are applied to describe yellow. Therefore, it is highly possible for other languages to think about other attributes to denote yellow. Meanwhile in English, yellow is explicated by using sun. Sun is natural entity which frequently appears and is visible to everyone. This explanation is also strengthened by Wierzbicka (1990) which emphasizes that sun is the visual key like fire in explaining and connecting colors with the nature and the surroundings in many languages.

Green is one of the colors that plays a very pivotal role in many languages. Indonesian denotes the color of green by using leaf. English at same time also denotes green with plants. Therefore, there is universalities to denote green in both languages. Leaf and plants are something which grow from the ground and people can observe them vividly. Harkness (1973) states that the colors of red, green, yellow, and blue are basics and function as the cognitive anchor. However, this point of view has been argued by Wierzbicka (1990) which believes that the concept of sun, sky, vegetation, and fire are the cognitive anchor for color naming that represent yellow, blue, green and red.

The concept of blue sky to denote the color of blue is the only one semantic atom used in both languages. In many languages in the world, the most frequent semantic atom used to describe blue either morphologically or etymologically has always been associated with the sky (Wierzbicka, 1990). But in many languages, there is also semantic atom applied to describe the color of blue like water. This is due to the fact that there is a fundamental difference to describe light blue and dark blue. This argument has also been strengthened by Paper et al's (2015) research in Serbian language which reveals that blue has been a reference to explicate sky and water.

CONCLUSION

This research attempts to elaborate and explicate colors in Indonesian by using NSM theory. The researcher claims that according to Berlin B. and Kay P. (1969), Indonesian has 6 basic colors that are: Black, White, Red, Yellow, Green and Blue. Meanwhile basic colors in English are Black, White, Red, Yellow, Green, Blue, Brown, Purple, Orange, Pink, and Grey. Indonesian in order to explicate the concept of colors within semantics framework always applies attributes easily seen, observed, and experienced. For example, when explaining the color of black, Indonesian uses charcoal to denote it or as the semantic atom in the explication because charcoal is an attribute that is pivotal in Indonesians' way of living. Meanwhile English uses different attribute or

semantic atom to explain black. English uses night sky to explain the color of black, and this is very much aligned with Wierzbicka's (1990) explanation that believes if the concepts of dark, and light, sun, sky, vegetation, and fire are the cognitive anchors that represent the color of white, black, yellow, blue, green and red.

This research has become a new reference for Linguistics particularly Semantics because it applies the theory of Natural Semantic Meaning in order to explain the basic and secondary colors Indonesian. Previous researches only focus on researching colors in Indonesian within the area of metaphors, metonymy, and relativity linguistics only. It turns out by using NSM theory, the colors can be explicated with smallest semantic atoms. Of course the theory of NSM isn't favored by anyone and there are critics about it. (Kay, 2004) delivers his critique about NSM by arguing that NSM can't provide and seek out the trail of diversity of the language and the spontaneity of human mind in regarding a concept. He argues that if being someone is being asked to explicate the color of green, he is sure the concept of green in everyone's mind is diverse. It is possible for someone to think about green car and not vegetation or plant to describe green color.

In order to better the further research on color by using semantic perspective, some improvements are needed such as examining and classifying what attributes are used in Indonesian to describe colors. The most important thing is cross discourse research, and other related research from other area of disciplines. Last but not least, the concept of colors is very much required to understand because it is a crucial part in using the language and culture. To conclude, Semantic primes used to explicate colors in Indonesians are primarily related to the nature, natural phenomena, vegetations, even body parts.

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