

METAPHORS AND PRAGMATIC IN MINANGKABAU LANGUAGE

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Abstrak

Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk melihat penggunaan metafora dan pola-pola pragmatik bahasa Minangkabau. Penggunaan kata-kata yang memiliki makna metafora dan pragmatik dapat ditemui dalam berbagai konteks kehidupan sehari-hari. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan metode simak bebas libat cakap (SBLC) dan teknik sadap. Berdasarkan analisis yang dilakukan, dapat disimpulkan bahwa sebuah budaya itu sangat berpengaruh terhadap pola-pola pragmatik dalam penggunaan metafora. Penutur asli bahasa Minangkabau dapat memahami dengan baik ketika terjadi perubahan makna dari makna literal ke makna metafora atau sebaliknya, sebab mereka memahami kedua jenis makna berdasarkan konteks penggunaannya.

Kata kunci: metafora, pragmatik, bahasa Minangkabau

Abstract

This article aims at describing the using of metaphors and pragmatics patterns in Minangkabau language. The usage of such words with metaphors and pragmatics might be found in many every day living contexts. This research is a qualitative research. The data collected during an intensive survey by using the listening method (metode simak) followed by tapping technique. Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that a culture could influence the using of metaphors in line with the using of pragmatics. The native speakers of Minangkabau language have the ability to understand what they are spoken about even by using the metaphors. Exactly, there is no much doubts of when and where they turn to change the use of literal meanings to the metaphorical ones and vice versa in their every day language, as well as they understand the two kinds of meaning perfectly according to context in which the speech act taken place.

Keywords: metaphors, pragmatics, Minangkabau

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1. Introduction

Every anthropologist believes that there is a close relationship between language and culture within a certain community. Just like the two sides of a coin, language and culture relate each other in a very complex way. A language is simply part of a culture that performs specific characters of a certain community while the culture itself is grown up in the medium of a language. Through language, the community shows what they are and how they are thinking about themselves and about their

surroundings. In one side, language shows the culture of the people of a certain community, and in the other one, the culture develops the language to a specified form of its own characters. Language and culture then become the social identification of the community in which every thing reality about the people can be a clear sight then; behaviours, beliefs, norms, and all kinds of artifacts of such culture. All of these are knotted by Kramsch (2001:3), in three doctrines; *language expresses culture reality*; *language embodies culture reality*; and *language symbolizes culture reality*.

Such cultural related aspects might be reflected in form of the way of determining the meaning of words in a particular language. In many languages, the meaning of words is determined literally or semantically but some metaphorically. When a language acts the literal meaning of the words, it means that the meaning refers to the normal semantic properties of every words used in the sentences, but in the other way, when it acts metaphorical meaning, it refers to some kind of resemblance of the semantic properties that are inferred to or just that are provided in the words.

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English, metaphor means the use of words to indicate something different from the literal meaning, as in 'I'll make him eat his words' or 'He has a heart of stone' (Hornby, 1987:533). An example to explain metaphorical phenomenon was given by Fromkin and Rodman by the sentence *Dr. Jeckyll is a butcher*. The literal meaning of the sentence is that a physician named Jeckyll also works as a retailer of meats or a slaughterer of animals used for food. The metaphorical meaning of the sentence is that the doctor named Jeckyll is harmful, possibly murderous, and may like to operate unnecessarily (1983:171).

Metaphor is something familiar to our life since it is found in almost languages of any culture. Duranti says that metaphor provides conceptual schemata through which we understand the world. Duranti also excerpts such suggestions of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) about metaphor in language as (i) Our every day language is much richer in metaphors that we might suspect; (ii) Metaphors are meant of viewing one kind of experience in term of another; and (iii) Metaphors imply certain theories (or "folk theories") about the world or our experience of it (Duranti, 2002:64).

Metaphor is dealing with what Sapir states that humans are actually at the mercy of the particular language they speak. The statement that echoed by Worf as the linguistic relativity principle is as the following quotation.

It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems in communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the "real world" is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached (Sapir, [1929] 1949b:162 in Duranti, 2002:60).

The meaning of metaphors is greatly depends on the context of the usage. This phenomenon has a close relationship with pragmatic since it can not be released from some consequences of pragmatic analysis. Levinson (1981:7) says that pragmatic analyzes meaning from perspective of functions; speech act, deixis, implicature, presupposition, and structure of discourses (Oktavianus, 2006:69). Moreover, the meaning of metaphors is extremely determined by the culture of which they are used. Those who out of that will be unable to understand the meaning eventhought they are within the context of the speech act. This is what we realize as the cultural related aspects of a language.

It seems that there is no language in which metaphorical meanings do not act at any extent. Metaphor is just like wild blossoms among the grass to language user of a particular culture. They grow and offer such fragrance and beauty to those in the circumstance. Indeed, this favorable

things will be entertained only by those who aware and consider that there the blossoms are among the grass. If not, it just be an understandable thing or even be regarded as a disgrace to the greenness of the grass. This metaphorical expression means that the metaphor will be understood only by those who experience in the culture that is intertwined with the language.

Specifically, in this way, we will discuss how metaphors used within Minangkabau language. The people of such culture of Minangkabau is more apt to use metaphorical meaning rather than the literal one in their speech act. This phenomenon is supposed to be more polite ways to live in harmony among them. The native speaker of Minangkabau, nearly has not much doubt to caught such the understanding of the metaphors since it had been widely embodied in their mind. So, every one in this community generally tends to use metaphors as well as they easily understand each other in their every day language.

The study of metaphors in every day language within Minangkabau culture is an essential study since it shows how a vernacular language relates to a particular culture. It has a great deal with the general study of meaning, specifically the metaphorical meaning. It will show how culture conditions play in the pragmatic rules of the metaphors and how such deictics are chosen to convey the metaphorical meanings exactly.

2. Analysis

The use of metaphors can be found in many contexts of the use of Minangkabau language by its native speakers in their daily conversations. Such words in the sentences of their every day language are greatly indicated in both literal and metaphorical meanings at the same time. But, somehow the native speakers of that language have the ability to understand what they are

spoken about. Exactly, there is no much doubts of when and where they turn to change their use of literal meanings to the metaphorical ones and vice versa as well as they catch their understanding of the two.

The use of metaphors in every day language of Minangkabau is likely a natural need in the communication among the community. This kind of language phenomenon in relation to a typical culture form of the community is really indicated in their social life. In this case, the examples of such metaphors are taken from every day speech acts of the community of Padang Panjang Pariangan, the oldest native village of so-called Minangkabau ancestors.

Here below, it will be exemplified some metaphors use in daily conversations among the people of Padang Panjang Pariangan. The metaphors are usually used for several functions such as a direction, an expression, a declaration, and a representation. It seems that metaphors could not be separated from pragmatic since it functionally depends on the context in which a speech act taken place. The following conversations show how metaphors play the actions in the speech act of the people of Minangkabau.

Conversation 1:

A: *Bara lamo baru si Banun tu kawin, anto alah lahie se anaknyo?*

Literal meaning:

How long does Banun marry so her child had been born?

Pragmatical meaning:

Banun just get married not to long ago but she had born her baby.

B: *Lah daulu bajak pada jawi agaknyo.*

Literal meaning:

Perhaps, the plow had surpassed the cow.

Pragmatic meaning:
of course, she had made love before marriage.

In majority, Minangkabau people are Moslems, so many norms in their social life are based on Islam rule like the norm of marriage. Those who are out of the norm, for example, those who bear a child in a lesser time than a normal range of pregnancy after the time of marriage, are supposed to be a norm-disabled ones. Culturally, the people of Minangkabau are allowed to do such cultural judgement or even punishment to the disabled ones by insulting on or separating them out. The metaphors are usually used to express the mockeries or the indignities.

In conversation 1, the sentence of A shows a pragmatic function in form of interrogative sentence for the declarative meaning by the sentence: *How long does Banun marry so her child had been born?* A questions for something (s)he knows exactly that Banun just get married within less than 9 months ago (the normal period of human pregnancy). So, the question is just the pragmatic expression for the statement: *Banun just get married not to long ago but she had born her baby.* The sentence of B literally means *Perhaps, the plow had surpassed the cow.* This sentence shows both of the two phenomena simultaneously; pragmatic and metaphor. The use of the word *perhaps* does not mean that B does not understand the matter any how. It is just pragmatic expression for the meaning: *The woman had made love ahead of the marriage time.*

Conversation 2:

A : *Baru karajo sapakan lah naiak pangkaik se si Pulan tu.*

Literal meaning:
Just working for about one week, Pulan had got a higher position.

Pragmatic meaning:
Pulan gets job promotion within a very short time of work.

B : *Inyo pandai maangkek talua, tantu yo.*

Literal meaning:
He knows how to heighten the eggs up, of course.

Pragmatic meaning:
He knows how to comfort his boss, actually.

In conversation 2, the sentence of A pragmatically conveys an astonishment by an informative statement. Generally, it is not a proper time to have promotion for just working about a week (sometimes, it is not an exact period, but metaphorically used to express a relative short time for work). The sentence of B shows the use of metaphor by the clause *he knows how to heighten the eggs up.* This clause does not mean to put some eggs higher, but it means metaphorically *He knows how to comfort his boss, actually* (usually by using unfair way), so he easily got the job promotion.

Conversation 3:

A: *Jan cameh jo nasib badan. Rasaki alang indak ka di musang.*

Literal meaning:
Don't so worry about the future. Eagle's foods will not being caught by civet.

Metaphorical meaning:
Don't so worry about the future since everyone has his own fortune.

B: *Baa indak ka cameh. Badan batenggang di banang salai.*

Literal meaning:
of course, I do. I should hang on the only thread.

Metaphorical meaning:

of course, I do. I should survive in a lackness/ I have just a weak hope.

In conversation 3, both of the speakers use both literal meaning sentence and metaphorical one. The literal meaning act in the first sentences of the two speaker and the metaphorical meaning in the second ones. The sentence of A, *Eagle's foods will not be being caught by civet* does not intend to tell about the fight between the two animals but to tell that everyone has his own fortune. Pragmatically, this sentence is aimed to advice B by asking her/him to be patient and convinced about her/his fortune but the sentence does not contain any requirement except statement. The sentence of B, *I should hang on the only thread*, is a metaphor. It does not mean that B really hangs on a piece of string but (s)he wants to say that (s)he should survive in a lackness or (s)he has just a weak hope in her/his life.

Conversation 4 :

A : *Tatumpang jo biduak ilie bananyo sajak balaki kayo.*

Literal meaning:

She had occupied on the downstreaming river craft since she marries a rich man .

Pragmatic meaning:

She does not has to work hard for money earning (as she did before) because she marries a rich man.

B : *Yo mujua kok lai ndak tatompang jo biduak tirih. Kok iyo, tantu karam di tangah (jalan).*

Literal meaning:

She is luck if it is not a leak river craft. If it is, it will founder on the way.

Metaphorical and pragmatic meaning:

Hope her husband loves her forever (will never diforce her) so she will be happy all along her life, if it is not, otherwise, she will back to poverty.

A and B in conversation 4 use metaphors. The sentence of A is a declarative sentence that tells about a woman who had occupied on the downstreaming river craft. Actually, in this conversation, A does not aim to tell the story of the journey of the woman through a river. This sentence is a metaphor that can be used to tell about that the woman gets a fortune since she marry a rich man. The sentence of B seems to have related literal meaning with the sentence of A. In fact, the sentences: *She is luck if it is not a leak river craft. If it is, it will founder in the way*, are not proposed to worry about the woman if she had occupied on a leak river craft as well as A is not also aimed to tell about it. The sentences are aimed to express hopes that the woman had really find her fortune in her life and to express an anxiety if it is not tangible. Pragmatically, the conversation 4 might conveys two opposite sosial expressions; a sincerity or jealousy.

Conversation 5 :

A: *Pasan mandeh kok buyuang ka bajalan. Lauik sati rantau batuah. Pandai-pandai Buyuang maniti buiah. Kok gadang jan malendo, kok tinggi jan mamijak. Kok sanang jan lupo jo asa.*

Literal meaning:

(Remember what mother) say if son will go 'merantau' (abroad)! The ocean might be sacred and the foreign land might be magical powered. Son should be able to walk on frooth. If son is huge, don't attack violently, if son is high, don't step on somebody. If son success in future, never forget your origin.

Pragmatic meaning:

Keep what I (mother) say when you (son) go to foreign country for a better job. The journey might be riskfull and the the country might be wickedness. You should take care of yourself. If you holds power, please don't abuse the authority, if you are well known, please don't leave any person that had supported that. If you success, please don't forget to back home.)

B: *Yo bana pasan mandeh. Dek larek iduik di kampuang, ka rantau untuang Buyuang tumpangan. Kok untuang tabangkik batang tarandam. Tabilai juo papan nan senteang, tatuka juo baju nan lusuah. Doa mande nan Buyuang arok.*

Literal meaning:

Mother's words are right. Since I live in misery in our home, it's better to leave to another land for a while. Hope I will be able to take the trees out from the water. for I could lengthen the short wood plates, for I could change the bad clothes. Just your blessing I really hope.

Pragmatic meaning

You are right, Mom! I decide to leave to another country for the better life because we are very poor but I can't get a good job here. I hope I would be success and could change this miserable to a pleasure, I hope we can construct new house and enjoy new clothes. Please pray for me, Mom!

5 has many complicated metaphors. These conversation shows how a very close social and psychological relationships between mother and son reflected through mother advices at the time the son will depart to other country. Culturally, Minangkabau people are very respectfull to a mother. Her advices and blessings are very important to the son especially at time of leaving home. In Minangkabau culture, the young sons are usually suggested to leave home to

find a better life before marriage, to study or to work abroad, generally to different islands. At first glance the literal meanings used in the sentences of A or B seem to be unlogic, but exactly the two persons do not intending to converse by using literal meanings in all the words they used. Most of them are meant metaphorically.

The sentences of A: *The ocean might be sacred and the foreign land might be magical powered. Son should be able to walk on froth. If son is huge, don't attack violently, if son is high, don't step on somebody.* have metaphorical meaning that the journey might be riskfull and the foreign country might be wickedness. The son should take care of his own safety. He is demanded not to abuse the authority when he might hold power, or not to forget any person that had supported him when he might be well known. In the other way, the sentences of B: *Hope I will be able to take the trees out from the water. For I could lengthen the short wood plates, for I could change the bad clothes* metaphorically means that the son hopes he would be success and could change this miserable to a pleasure, and he hope that he would be rich enough to construct new house and to buy new clothes.

3. Conclusion

The five conversations above show us of how the metaphors used in a large extent in everyday language of Minangkabau. The use of metaphors do not strictly aparted from the sentences that act the literal meanings. Such sentences with literal meanings and metaphorical ones may appear in a conversation or in a speech act at the same time.

The use of this kind of cultural related phenomenon, metaphors, in every day language of Minangkabau seems to be a rhetoric of Minangkabau people to their native language. The

native speakers of Minangkabau language have the ability to understand what they are spoken about even by using the metaphors. Exactly, there is no much doubts of when and where they turn to change the use of literal meanings to the metaphorical ones and vice versa in their every day language, as well as they understand the two kinds of meaning perfectly according to context in which the speech act taken place.

By all above explanations, we can conclude that the metaphor is a kind of social reality in relation to language interpretation of meaning devices in a linguistic performance that implies the experience of speakers of a language about their own world of such culture, as well as Minangkabau culture. It means that metaphor is a form of cultural aspect of a language use within a society.

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