

The Speech Act Associated with the Fundamental Kinship Relation in Karo Society

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Abstract. This research is intended to analyze about the speech act associated with the fundamental kinship relation in Karo society. The fundamental kinship relation in Karo society is concerned with the Metenget “alertful or paying great attention”, Metami “loving, giving soft words, flattery” and Mehamat “loyal, respectful, honour”. All of these three words must be expressed through words or speech. The method of research is done by using library research or by taking some references from the articles and books. The analysis of this research is found that the speech act which are divided into three, such as locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act are utilized in the three fundamental kinship relations. It is not only in the party, but also every where while they are meeting together between anak beru “sisters or her husband”, senina “brothers or the same clan” and kalimbubu “mother’s brother and his wife”. The conclusion is that the types of the speech acts, such as locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act are very important in the implementation of the three fundamental kinship relations like metenget, metami and mehamat.

Keywords: speech acts, kinship, karo society.

I. INTRODUCTION

This research is focused on the speech act associated with the fundamental kinship relation in Karo Society. The most important thing in karo custom who involved in every moment of party is called rakut sitelu “three-unity” which consist of Anak Beru, Kalimbubu and Senina. The clans in karo tribe consist of five clans, such as: karo-karo, ginting, perangin-angin, tarigan and sembinging or that is called Merga Si Lima”. How to unite these five clans, there must be the three unity to be applied among the Karo Society and the strategy of communication must apply the three fundamental kinship relation, such as: *Metami* “giving love or affectionate”, *Metenget* “pay attention”, *ras Mehamat* “giving respect or politeness”.

This kind of research is concerned with speech act in karo tradition communication. In Lina and Barus (2017), there are 14 (fourteen) kinds of speech act, they are:

1. Speech act of shaking hand.
2. Speech act of blessing.
3. Speech act of appealing.
4. Speech act of praising.
5. Speech act of requesting.
6. Speech act of promising.
7. Speech act of suggesting.
8. Speech act of warning.
9. Speech act of legalizing.
10. Speech act of thanking.
11. Speech act of responding.
12. Speech act of describing.

13. Speech act of questioning.
14. Speech act of advising.

The above fourteen of speech acts must have the fundamental way of communication in speech between one and another in order to protect miscommunication as well as misappreciation. Speech act of advising in Karo tradition can be done by using proverbs (Barus, 2018).

According to Listya and Febrie (2015(Listya, n.d.)) in Rahmayani (2018) that speech produced by the speaker must have purpose and function, which is addressed to the listener to convey information to the listener. Speech is researched in terms of the speech production and speech perception of the sounds used in vocal language.

In Sembiring (www.iosrjournals.org p.3). Among turang, they cannot directly communicate each other, there must be another person to be inter-relator. "Turangkundu or turang" can be said also as "Rebu".

Among brother and sister of the same parents or the same clans of different gender are not allowed to communicate directly as well as seating side by side (taboo). They are not allowed to stay in one house without being accompanied by the third person.

This research is intended to show the expressions of speech act used in Karo language as part of culture. Every tribe in this world generally has culture to show how to use the language as part of the appreciation or respectfulness to other people.

The culture of a tribe is the picture or reflection of the way of life of a community. The quality of a tribe will be reflected from the norms or customs of those nations or tribes. The norms or custom of Karo tribe regulate the inter-relation between one and another in the same or different tribes.

Parera in Risnawaty, (2005), there are some hypotheses that can be used to answer the question how to commence the speech or the beginning of communication, when the communicators between the district leader (Bupati or city leader) and the province leader (governor). They must be respected as the same case with kalimbubu.

Hypothesis 1: Someone who has the higher rank/position, it must dominantly open the speech rather than those who are lower rank.

Hypothesis 2: Someone who has more skillful, must definitely start the speech and usually becomes the initiator of making communication if we compare it with those who are less knowledge.

In Karo tradition, the hypothesis 1 is the opposite of karo custom, it depends on the situation or condition such as in marriage party the lower rank must open the speech. The lower rank is called Anak Beru who will guide the program, the next turn is called Kalimbubu. It is part of the respect given to Kalimbubu. The content of speech presented by Kalimbubu is a kind of advice to anak beru as well as those who are getting marriage at this moment.

Yule 1996 in Risnawaty 2005, the concept of speech act is very suitable used as fundamental kinship relation in interaction or attitude in culture. Speech act becomes the first priority in the life of Karo society, particularly in Karo tradition. It is not only as social interaction but it becomes the identity of prestige to give respect or appreciation to others.

Speech act is an action performed in saying something. We can perform speech acts when we offer an apology, greeting, request, complaint, invitation, compliment, or refusal. A speech act is an utterance that serves a function in communication. A speech act might contain just one word; as in

“Sorry!” to perform an apology, or several words or sentences: “I ‘m sorry I forgot your birthday. I just let it slip my mind.”

The speech act theory is one of the rigorous attempts to systematically explain the workings of language. It is not only widely influential in the philosophy of language, but in the areas of linguistics and communication as well (Mabaquiao, 2018).

According to Ogden, Speech act can be divided into three types, they are locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. A locutionary act is the act of producing a meaningful linguistic expression, or the literal meaning of what a speaker says. For example: I’d like to order a cup of coffee. An Illocutionary act performed merely by (in) saying something. Examples: assert, question, exclaim, threaten, promise, apologize, command, warn, suggest, request, wager, object, christen, marry, and bequeath. The illocutionary force of an utterance is another name for the act behind that utterance. A perlocutionary act is the effect that a speaker’s utterance has on a listener. It is also known as a perlocutionary effect. Some examples of perlocutionary acts include: persuading, convincing, scaring, enlightening, and inspiring.

In Budiarsih (2016), Handayani (2016) quoted Searle statement that speech acts are divided into three kinds, those are locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. On the other hand, [Isnawati et al. \(2015\)](#) stated that “*in uttering a sentence, a speaker is generally involved in three different acts: “locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act”*

The objectivity of speech act is to show respectfulness to other people, in Karo language is said “mehamat” means polite. The words to show politeness must choose or select what word can be used in Karo Online Dictionary, 2021, such as:

- **Halep/lawes/idilo Dibata/rujung (geluhna)** in stead of saying **mate**: the word that is used in condolence situation as part of karo tradition in some part of region. The dead person is already quite old. On the other hand, instead of saying *halep*, the word *enggo rujung* “has come to the end of his/ or her life”.
- **Ibuniken** instead of saying **ikuburken**: this word is used when someone is buried or put into the grave.
- **Mehaga** instead of saying **embelin/meherga**: great, respected, grand, noble. For example: Pesta perjabunna seh kal hagana “His wedding party is very glorious”.
- **Senu** instead of saying **mereng**: mad, lunatic, abnormal
- **Gutul** instead of saying **la terpakai**: not good character or behavior.
- **Gutgut**: instead of saying **gutul**, the word **gutgut** can be said to those who are rather bad character.
- **Hangat** instead of saying **mberat**: heavy. The word **mberat** can be used to animal or inanimate things, but the polite one is usually used **hangat**. For example: carrying a child using cloth, the person who carried a child may say **hangat or mehangat**.
- **Hangke or mehangke** instead of saying **segan**: reluctant. This word is usually used to those who are already old or parent in law as well as between brother and sister of the same parents.
- **Erlagu** instead of saying **melala cakapna** “too much talking”.
- **erpendebi/ debi** instead of saying **ngerana la erbuku** “talking without paying attention to the norms of interaction among human or those who are already adult. Debi “about expression or action (polite, good and very smooth)”.

In Budiasih (2016), Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the use of languages that integrate to grammar which consists of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics ([Leech, 2011](#)). In contrast to Leech, [Yule \(1996\)](#) defined Pragmatics into four scopes. First, *pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning*. Second, *pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning*. Third *pragmatics is the*

study of how communication gets more than is said. The last, the pragmatics study of expression of relative distance.

II. METHODS

The method of this research is done with descriptive or qualitative research that is taking some references from the library, articles of researchers. It is the same case with the method stated by Moleong (2012:6) that qualitative research is the research intended to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by researcher, such as behaviour, perception, motivation, action at cetra with holistic means and by description in the form of words and language in specific context scientifically. The way of collecting the data is descriptive qualitative method, but it is supported by the casual data from the informants. According to Yin (2011) in Barus: 2024, there are five steps in analyzing data: compiling, disassembling, interpreting, and concluding. Textual references including articles published in the journals related to this discussion. All the data and information found here are analyzed with the qualitative system and being interpreted all from the beginning till the end of research.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research is concerned with the speech act associated with the fundamental kinship relation in Karo Society. Karo people have plenty of unique culture that is to unite among them and keeping harmonious society Speech act theory is a philosophical theory that explains how language is used in every day communication. It focuses on the meaning of linguistitc expressions and the rules that govern their use in speech act.

Theories about speech acts can be traced back to the lectures of J.L.Austin, which were later published in the book How to Do Things with Words. Austin rather than just describing something.

The principle of life for Karo people is quite familiar for them that is Merga Silima, Rakut Sitelu and Tuter Siwaluh. Merga means clan and merga silima means five clans for karo cociety, they are Karo-Karo, Ginting, Perangin-angin, Sembiring, and Tarigan. Tuter Siwaluh is kinship things which are the concept in karo society and consists of eight relations, such as: Puang Kalimbubu, Kalumbubu, Senina, Sembuyak, Senina, Sipemerren, Senina Siparibanen, Anak Beru, Anak Beru Menteri.

Tuter Siwaluh makes up the elements of having acquaintance with more vast used in the tradition of making known one and another by using the clan as the fundamental kinship of karo people. As Rakut Sitelu is the kinship system and cultural tradition of karo people. Rakut Sitelu is the important thing in Karo people life and having the role in every moment of Karo party.

On the basis of the above elaboration, it is seen that the change of the custom implementation from the original tradition to more simple one in which the task of Anak Beru becomes less than before. The responsibility or task of Anak Beru are not compulsory any more to cook the complement of cooking meals, such as cooking rice, vegetable and all things to serve Kalimbubu and all the guests who are invited by the holder of party. But the present time, the task of anak beru remains distributing the meals to all the guests who come to the party.

3.1 Metami man Anak Beru

Metami means giving full appreciation from Kalimbubu to Anak Beru so that anak beru will be active or easy to do any thing ordered by Kalimbubu. The kind of language or expression spoken by Kalimbubu to anak beru must be polite, There are three types of acts of speaking. J.L. Austin (1962), a British philosopher of language, introduced the speech act theory in his lectures and in his book *How to Do Things with Words*. Theory explains how people use language to perform actions, such as making statements, giving commands, or apologizing:

- Locutionary act is the meaning of the words used
- Illocutionary act is the speaker's intention.
- Perlocutionary act is the listener's interpretation of the words.

The most general act is called LOCUTION. LOCUTION is any act of saying something meaningful. The act in which a speaker specifies or has some purposes of his utterance e.g. his purpose is to threaten somebody, to warn someone, persuade somebody, nominate somebody is called ILLOCUTION. However, the theory of speech act itself is more introduced by Searle said that in daily life, there are at least three types of speech acts. He further said that speech acts divided into three types, namely locution (*locutionary act*), illocution (*illocutionary act*), and perlocution (*perlocutionary act*) (Searle, 1969).

A perlocutionary act (or perlocutionary effect) is the effect of an utterance on an interlocutor (friend to whom the speaker speaks). A perlocutionary act is one of getting somebody to do something; Examples: persuading (them to do something), convincing (them to think something), scaring (getting them to be afraid), insulting (getting them to be offended), amusing (getting them to laugh/get amusement).

In every party, such as condolence party or wedding party, there are some requirements of kalimbubu's obligation to indicate that they appreciate their anak beru. For example at the end of condolence party or event, kalimbubu must give gupak "knife". isap "cigarette" and colok "match". Giving gupak means part of appreciation to anak beru from kalimbubu so that anak beru will be humble and easy to do any thing requested by kalimbubu eventhough it is a must for anak beru to do it. The symbolic meaning of the expression of the three components are:

Kalimbubu's expression to anak beru: Enda telu macam arah kami nari kalimbubundu emkap gupak, colok and isap anak beru kami, kam anak beru man tanda-tanda gelahna kam ula lupa ndahiken kerja-kerja kalimbubundu "Here they are three kinds of equipments from your kalimbubu" Gupak "knife" the symbol of anak beru's duty to cut the vegetables, meat, cooking rice at cetera in the kitchen". As colok "match" is the symbol of lightening the fire or to lit the stove and also to lighten the cigarette while cooking in the kitchen. This is the meaning of the phrase "metami man anak beru". Even though kalimbubu is highest rank in karo custom, there must be an obligation of kalimbubu to anak beru by presenting some requirements addressed to anak beru. It is called *speech act of praising* in the above types of speech acts in Lina and Barus (2017).

3.2 Metenget man Senina

Senina means brothers of the same parents or the same clans. **Metenget** means caring, appreciating or keeping harmony. It is not only the same parents but also different parents but the same clans, they can be said as senina. Among senina, they must keep in harmony or unity, for example: in one event or wedding party. They must work together and mutual understanding,

appreciating so that there is no difference between one and another. In order they can live together and work together in solving the problem, doing task as anak beru, as kalimbubu and so on in one party or event, they have to keep in harmony, mutual appreciation, selecting the words to express something between one and another.

On the other hand, when there is an event such as married party, condolence at cetera, they have to make their unity by collecting the money to buy uis kapal “thick cloth” or it is usually used when there is traditional event in the family. That uis kapal is given to kalimbubu indicating their unity to praise their kalimbubu. The expression given to kalimbubu is: *Enda kalimbubu kami uis kapal tanda-tanda arih kami ersada anak berundu, sehat-sehat kam kerina ras panjang umurndu* “Here it is our kalimbubu, thick cloth as the sign of unity of your anak beru, be healthy all and long life”.

3.3 Mehamat Erkalimbubu

Mehamat means respectful or giving value or honour. In Karo tradition, kalimbubu is symbolized as visible God. They are the brother of our mother, parent in law including their wives. According to karo belief, kalimbubu must be respected, if they are not respected, anak beru’s fate will be bad or prosperity will not come to anak family of anak beru, it means God will not bless their life.

That is why, anak beru must give respect or appreciate and be honour to their kalimbubu where ever it is. The signs of respect or appreciation given to kalimbubu in karo tradition is that at the time of married or condolence events, the place of sitting must be provided, such as white mat on which they are seated, give cigarette or sirih as the sign of respect or appreciation.

There is a special expression addressed to kalimbubu when they have come and sit on the white mat, such as: *Enda kalimbubu, kami anak berundu enggo reh nandangi kam embereken isapen ras belo cawir nandangi kam kerina kalimbubu kami* “Here it is, we are you anak beru have come in front of you give cigarette and betel leaf with all complement inside”. On the other hand, welcoming speech from anak beru will be addressed to Kalimbubu and all the guests.

On the basis of the data above, it can be said as the way of making communication between kalimbubu to anak beru, anak beru to kalimbubu as well as among senina that is the sub-topics of discussions, they are mehamat man kalimbubu, metami man anak beru and metenget man senina. The words which are used must be selected. For examples:

Locutionary Acts: The speaker may say:

- a. *Enggo rujung geluhna or enggo idilo Dibata* “He has passed away”. Instead of using the word ‘mate’,.
- b. *Bolang ibuniken pepagi enca ciger* “Grand father is buried tomorrow afternoon”. Instead of using *ikuburken*.
- c. *Pesta perjabun anakta mehaga or meherga ikerjaken* “Wedding party of our son is done with great event”. Instead of saying ‘embelin’.
- d. *Enggo senu anakna ndai* “Our son has been mad”. Instead of using the word ‘mereng’.

Perlocutionary Acts of the above expressions can be construed such as number (a, b,c) as bujur ibas informasindu. For (d) may be responded as showing disappointed facial expression or thank you for the information.

IV. CONCLUSION

On the basis of the analysis of research, it can be concluded that the research is very significant to the readers particularly for the youths of Karo people, so that they know their tradition or custom in Karo society.

Speech act of praising, appealing, blessing are used in this research as they are done by anak beru to kalimbubu such as giving uis kapal “thick cloth” and vice versa from kalimbubu to anak beru such as gupak “knife”. colok “match” and isap “cigarette” beside expressing the particular expressions as part of locutionary act. As the perlocutionary, there must be the response given by each side of them kalimbubu, senina and anak beru.

The fundamental kinship of karo people in the society must be implemented in the sense that the tradition or custom is still valid even though after some times, it can be extinct or left by the young generation of karo people.

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