



THE CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE ANALYSIS IN MINANGKABAUNESE DAILY CONVERSATIONS

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Abstract

This study analyzes conversational implicatures in daily conversations among the Minangkabau people to identify the types of implicatures and their communicative functions. The research problem focuses on how implicatures are used and the role they play in everyday communication among Minangkabau speakers. Using qualitative methods, data were collected through non-participant observation by recording natural conversations in Sungai Pua. The recordings were then transcribed and analyzed based on Grice's conversational implicature theory to identify types of Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI) and Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI), as well as Searle's speech act theory to identify the function of implied utterances. The results showed that Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI) was used more frequently and had dominant functions ranging from representative, directive, expressive, to commissive. This study concluded that implicature helped speakers convey meaning beyond literal words, maintain social harmony, and ensure smooth interaction in everyday conversations in the Minangkabau community.

Keywords : Conversational Implicature, Minangkabau Language, Daily Conversations

A. INTRODUCTION

People connect through communication with one another in order to exchange understanding of what they mean. Communication is a way to convey meaning and actions, which can only occur within a network (Luhmann, 1992). In other words, communication is a two-way process in which the listener and speaker understand the meaning of a statement.

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Language is an important part of facilitating communication because it requires the choice of language that is easily understood among speakers. Listeners are expected to understand the meaning that the speaker wants to convey through that language. However, in some situations, it may be found that the speaker does not directly convey the true meaning in their speech. In this situation, the context will fulfill the speaker's expectations. Language is not used in a vacant space; rather, we use it within a context, and a large part of that context is our experience of reality (Trask, 2003). Thus, every utterance will have the possibility to create various meanings depending on each context. This kind of understanding, which requires context because it is not conveyed directly, is referred to as implicit meaning. A situation where meaning is conveyed indirectly in speech is referred to as conversational implicature (Huang, 2014). This means that what the speaker actually means is not contained in the sentence.

Various previous studies have examined conversational implicature. For example, Pebriantika and Jazadi (2017) investigated conversational implicature studied in daily Sumbawanese conversation and the principle of politeness in implication. In addition, Anindya et al. (2019) conducted research on the function of conversational implicature between Mitsubishi car salespeople and consumers in Padang. Lilyan et al (2023), investigates the conversational found in students' conversations of pragmatic class. Although these studies have provided valuable insight into various aspects of conversational implicature, the gap was in the implicature by Minangkabau language.

This research aims to address this gap by examining the function of implicatures by looking at the two types of conversational implicatures. The two types of conversational implicature are generalized conversational implicature and particularized conversational implicature (Grice, 1975). Generalized conversational implicature is when the meaning is more predictable because not based on particular context, while particularized conversational implicature is more limited because it is based on knowledge, special context or situation owned and experienced by the speaker and the listener.

Meanwhile, researchers use John Searle's theory to explain the function of implicature. Illocutionary acts indicate the speakers intention and function behind the utterance (Searle, 1976). Searle divides illocutionary acts into five types: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Each kind represents a particular function of language in communication. In this study, the researcher used the two theories by Grice and Searle to analyze the types and their functions that were found in Minangkabaunese daily conversations.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study applied a qualitative descriptive method to examine the implications of natural Minangkabau daily conversations. The researcher acts as the main instrument, supported by audio recordings and taking notes. Data is collected through non-participant observation in a natural setting in the home, ensuring that

conversations flow spontaneously without external influences. To prevent misinterpretations and attempt to be more accurate with recorded conversations, data was validated with the participants.

The collected data is then transcribed, translated, and analyzed using established theories to identify the types and functions of implications. The process of categorization and identification is carried out to determine the dominant pattern, which leads to conclusions that inform the purpose of the study. By combining systematic observation as well as careful analysis, this research method ensures that the findings accurately reflect the use of real-life implications in the daily conversations of Minangkabau speaking people.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Research Findings

This study draws the data from spontaneous daily discussions in Minangkabaunese that were captured over three days in Jorong V Kampung, Sungai Pua, West Sumatra. The discussions were captured on a smartphone in natural, casual settings such as at home, during daily activities, or while the speakers were spending time together. These discussions illustrate how people in Sungai Pua communicate in their daily lives: casual, comfortable, and full of significance that is not necessarily expressed openly.

In total, there are about 3 hours of audio recordings that have been hand transcribed into approximately 38 pages of text. The speakers in the chats are local people of Jorong V Kampung, Sungai Pua, both male and female, generally adults, and they utilized informal Minangkabaunese throughout the conversations.

The data was focused on identifying utterances that contain conversational implicature, based on Grice's theory, which divides implicature into two types: generalized and particularized. After identifying the types, the research also analyzes the function of each implicature using Searle's Speech Act Theory, which includes representative, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative acts.

a. Types of Conversational Implicature

This section illustrates the classification of conversational implicatures discovered in the collected data using Grice's (1975) theory. The data is separated into two categories: Generalized Conversational Implications (GCI) and Particularized Conversational Implications (PCI).

This research found 159 utterances with conversational implicature out of 1,392 utterances that were gathered from Minangkabaunese daily conversations that were recorded. Analysis showed that 108 utterances (68%) were classified as GCI and 51 utterances (32%) as PCI. The fact that GCI was more common in the data suggests that the speakers in these discussions commonly not used certain contextual information that was presented throughout the contact to imply meanings.

The distribution of the two categories of conversational implicature identified in the data is shown in the table below.

Type of Conversational Implicature	Frequency	Percentage
Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI)	108	68%
Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI)	51	32%
Total	159	100%

Table 1. Type of Conversational Implicature

Examples of both GCI and PCI drawn from the data are included in the table below to help illustrate how each kind manifests in the conversations:

No	Utterance	Type	Implied Meaning
1	Mayar: <i>Anak si Il ado lo laki-laki yo</i> (Il's kid, one of them is a boy too right?) Upik: Kelas duo (Second grade)	GCI	Upik responded indirectly by confirming that Il's child is a boy, not by explicitly saying 'yes', but by immediately mentioning that the child is in the second grade of elementary school
2	Dessy: <i>Ndak caliak ikan lu a, ka bali ikan?</i> (I want to see the fish first, are you want some fish?) Mayar: Ntah lai jo ntah indak (I don't know if there's any left or not)	GCI	Mayar implied that she would buy fish if it ran out, but she was unsure because she couldn't remember if there was any fish left.
3	Diva: <i>Tu lah dapek?</i> (So, she got it?) Meli: Antahlah kama, bia me lah haha (Don't know where, just let it be haha)	GCI	Meli implied that the tie had not been found yet.
4	Dessy: <i>Kalau lapau si ta dibantiang no stir no tadi baa du eh?</i> (What if ta's stall got hit when they slammed the steering earlier, huh?) Zakirman: A lapau si ta tu ndak ado lai (Nah, there's no ta's stall anymore)	PCI	Zakirman implied that Ta's food stall would no longer exist because it was not strong enough to withstand the impact of the car.
5	Dessy: <i>Eh mantun oto kalau putuih rem tu yo</i> (That's what a car's like when the brakes fail, yeah) Upik: Dek no manurun lo, si (Cause it was going downhill, si)	PCI	Upik implied that brake failure on a downhill road made the car uncontrollable.

Table 2. Data examples of GCI and PCI

The table above shows that the dominant type of implicature in the data is generalized conversational implicature (GCI). This means that in most conversations, speakers are usually not used situational cues or specifically shared information to convey meaning subtly. Further analysis of selected utterances from the transcripts listed in the table above is presented in the next section to clarify how each form of implicature appears in conversations between these Minangkabau-speaking locals.

- (1) Mayar: *Anak si Il ado lo laki-laki yo?*
 'Il's kid, one of them is a boy too right?'

Upik: *Kelas duo*

'Second grade'

Type: GCI

In this conversation, Mayar asked whether Il also had a son, to which Upik replied "kelas duo" (second grade of elementary school) instead of directly saying "yes." The context shows that both speakers shared the same understanding, so Upik's answer was easily interpreted as confirmation that Il indeed has a son. The implied meaning of the utterance is "Yes, Il has a son, and he is in the second grade of elementary school." This utterance is categorized as a Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI) because the meaning could be understood without requiring specific contextual knowledge; Mayar did not need further explanation to grasp the intended confirmation.

- (2) Dessy: *Ndak caliak ikan lu a, ka bali ikan?*
 'I want to see the fish first, are you want some fish?'

Mayar: *Ntah lai jo ntah indak*

'I don't know if there's any left or not'

Type: GCI

Dessy was planning to go to the market to shop and was about to ask Mayar if she was going to buy fish. Mayar also answered indirectly that she did not know if there was any fish left to cook because if there was, she would not have asked Dessy to buy fish. This is interpreted as GCI because no special information is needed between participants to understand the meaning of Mayar's utterance because it only answers that Mayar does not intend to buy fish.

- (3) Diva: *Tu lah dapek?*
 'So, she got it?'

Meli: *Antahlah kama, bia me lah haha*

'Don't know where, just let it be haha'

Type: GCI

The context of this utterance is Wildan's school tie that was lost because it was played with by a cat. Diva also asked if the tie had been found, but Meli did not answer directly that the tie had not been found, Meli only said that

let it go even though it was lost. Here Meli could have answered Diva's question simply by saying "not yet found" but instead chose to answer that she would not care about the tie and just let it go first.

- (4) Dessy: *Kalau lapau si ta dibantiang no stir no tadi baa du eh?*
 'What if ta's stall got hit when they slammed the steering earlier?'

Zakirman: *A lapau si ta tu ndak ado lai*

'Nah, there's no ta's stall anymore'

Type: PCI

After the accident that occurred that morning due to the car's brakes failing, causing it to speed out of control and crash into one of the residents' houses, Dessy asked what would have happened if the car had not crashed into the house but instead crashed into a food stall located near the house, which was made only of wood and plywood. Zakirman replied indirectly that the stall would have been completely destroyed because it would not have been strong enough to withstand the force of the car. Zakirman's response requires a specific context to be understood, as the information about the stall being made of wood and plywood is not common knowledge and would likely only be known to those in the immediate surroundings. Thus, the statement in the first data point qualifies as a PCI type of conversational implicature.

- (5) Dessy: *Eh mantun oto kalau putuih rem tu yo*
 'That's what a car's like when the brakes fail'

Upik: *Dek no manurun lo, si*

'Cause it was going downhill, si'

Type: PCI

Dessy witnessed firsthand a car accident that occurred due to a brake failure. And she stated that this is how the car looked when the brakes failed. Upik then added that it was because of the downhill road, which directly implies to Dessy that the downhill road makes the car with broken brakes more difficult to control so it looks very fast or in other words, the car with broken brakes will not go at high speed if it happens on a flat road.

b. Functions of Conversational Implicature

The next stage is to categorize the different kinds of conversational implicatures that were discovered in the data based on their communicative purposes. Representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations are the five primary functions of utterances, according to Searle's (1976) speech act theory, which is followed in this classification.

The distribution of functions based on the examination of the 159 utterances with implicatures is shown in the table below.

Function	Frequency	Percentage
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Representatives	130	82%
Directives	12	7,5%
Commissives	2	1%
Expressives	15	9,5%
Declarations	0	0%
Total	159	100%

Table 3. Functions of Conversational Implicature

In order to provide a more thorough explanation of the functions of conversational implicature, the subsequent section will analyze a few chosen examples from the data and explain how each utterance fits into one of these categories.

No	Function	Utterance	Interpretation
1	Representative	Dessy: Kalau lapau si ta dibantiang no stir no tadi baa du eh? (<i>What if ta's stall got hit when they slammed the steering earlier, huh?</i>) Zakirman: A lapau si ta tu ndak ado lai (<i>Nah, there's no ta's stall anymore</i>)	Zakirman made an assertion to Dessy's remark and intended to tell Dessy the answer if Si Ta's stall would not be able to withstand the strong collision of the car that crashed. This implied speech aims to convey information.
2	Representative	Dessy: Eh mantun oto kalau putuih rem tu yo (<i>That's what a car's like when the brakes fail, yeah</i>) Upik: Dek no manurun lo, si (<i>Cause it was going downhill, si</i>)	Upik's answer shows that it is information, which has a cause-and-effect of what Dessy meant in her utterance.
3	Directive	Upik: Bagetar me no (<i>It's just shaking</i>) Meli: Caliak lah anu no (<i>Check that out</i>)	Meli's implied speech shows a command to Upik which has the purpose that Upik can fix her own cellphone settings.

4	Commissive	Upik: Kabek nasi no li a (Time to wrap the rice)	Even though the sentence was not directly structured as a promise, the implicature shows that Upik was committing herself to do the action of preparing Wildan's rice
5	Expressive	Dessy: <i>Eh? Babadak Kayla mau kemana?</i> (Kayla, where are you going with makeup?) Meli: Maci baru nampak hahaha (Maci just saw, hahaha)	Meli's utterance implied that it was funny and a bit surprising for Dessy to only notice Kayla's makeup session at that moment, even though it had been going on for quite a while. It implied: "How could you just realize now, when it's been obvious from earlier?"

Table 4. Data Examples of Conversational Implicature Functions

The table here shows that there are few implicatures found in their conversations that mean to give orders, show feelings, to perform an action, and especially to change a fact.

2. Discussion

The results of the analysis of everyday conversations among the Minangkabau community in Jorong Limo Kampuang, Sungai Pua show that Particular Conversation Implicature (PCI) is more dominant than General Conversation Implicature (GCI). This finding indicates that Minangkabaunese speakers tend to communicate through shared and common knowledge rather than relying on specific situational contexts. Such a pattern suggests a communicative style that values efficiency and shared understanding over contextual elaboration.

These results are consistent with Grice's theory (1975), which explains that PCI requires specific contextual information to be interpreted correctly, while GCI can be understood in general without requiring specific knowledge. The dominance of GCI supports the argument that Minangkabaunese people maintain communication based on mutual assumptions and collective experiences, reflecting a community-oriented speech culture. The lower frequency of PCI in this study

supports the idea that the Minangkabaunese conversational style tends to be not heavily context-dependent and indirect, relying on subtle cues and shared meanings rather than explicit statements.

Furthermore, the preference for particularized conversational implicatures in everyday Minangkabaunese conversation reflects a strong cultural emphasis on close interpersonal relationships and shared understanding within the community. This implies that even when speakers use PCI, they do so intentionally to express intimacy or emotional closeness, not because the context forces them to. In other words, implicature use in this society functions as a strategic and culturally shaped choice rather than a purely linguistic phenomenon. This indirect style of communication helps maintain social harmony and demonstrates respect, which are important cultural values in Minangkabau society.

Regarding the functions of conversational implicatures, the data show that the representative function is the most frequently used, followed by the expressive, directive, and commissive functions, with no declarative function found. This pattern indicates that Minangkabaunese communication primarily serves to share knowledge and express attitudes, which aligns with the cooperative and relational nature of their daily interactions. This distribution shows that speakers generally use implicatures to convey information, express beliefs or opinions, and describe situations indirectly rather than to give direct commands, promises, or institutional declarations.

When compared with previous studies, this research not only supports the idea that implicatures play a central role in communication but also highlights the cultural and contextual uniqueness of Minangkabaunese interactions. The functions of implicature in this study show that in everyday Minangkabaunese conversations, implicatures serve as a practical and efficient tool to maintain social closeness, express meaning indirectly, and strengthen communal bonds. This reflects that language in Minangkabau is not only a tool of expression but also a medium of social cohesion.

All things considered, the findings demonstrate how conversational implicature plays a crucial role in Minangkabaunese everyday discourse as a tool for efficient and respectful communication, enabling speakers to convey complex meanings through indirectness and context dependency. Therefore, this study strengthens the argument that implicature is a central pragmatic device in Minangkabaunese interaction and a key reflection of its speakers' cultural values.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The findings reveal that conversational implicature plays a central role in Minangkabaunese daily interaction. The dominance of generalized implicatures shows that speakers tend to rely on shared understanding and mutual knowledge to

express meaning efficiently. This pattern reflects the Minangkabaunese preference for indirect, polite, and harmonious communication.

Overall, implicature functions as a cultural and pragmatic strategy that maintains social closeness, conveys meaning implicitly, and strengthens community relationships through subtle and respectful language use. It also shows that implicatures are often used not to make formal commitments or announcements, but rather to state facts, share opinions, and describe situations indirectly. Additionally, promoting awareness within the community about indirect communication styles and the use of implicatures may help reduce misunderstandings, particularly in intergenerational interactions or cross-cultural communication.

This study offers valuable insights into pragmatic communication in Minangkabau culture, which emphasizes the importance of indirectness and dependence on context in everyday conversation. By applying established theories of conversational implicature to the local language context, this study not only reinforces the universality of these theories but also highlights the cultural nuances that shape pragmatic meaning. Future researchers can also apply different linguistic approaches, such as sociolinguistics or discourse analysis, to gain a deeper understanding of how social factors shape communication styles. Teachers or language practitioners are also encouraged to include pragmatic elements like implicature in language learning to help students understand meaning beyond words and communicate more effectively in both local and cross-cultural interactions.

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