

DIFFERENCES IN EUPHEMISMS USED BY MALE AND FEMALE IN MINANGKABAUNESE

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Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan tipe tipe ungkapan pelembut (eufemisme) dan fungsi fungsi ungkapan pelembut (eufemisme) yang diujarkan oleh laki laki dan perempuan di dalam bahasa Minangkabau. Penelitian ini termasuk penelitian secara deskriptif yang berpijak pada fakta dan realita dari ungkapan pelembut (eufemisme) yang diujarkan oleh laki laki dan perempuan di kawasan Minangkabau dalam percakapan sehari hari. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat 221 buah eufemisme yang digunakan oleh laki laki dan perempuan dalam bahasa Minangkabau. Laki laki mengujarkan 143 ungkapan eufemisme dan memiliki 13 tipe ungkapan eufemisme sedangkan perempuan mengujarkan 78 ungkapan euphemism dan memiliki 15 tipe ungkapan eufemisme. Tipe yang paling banyak di temukan dari laki laki dan perempuan adalah *external borrowing* (kata pinjaman yang diambil dari luar bahasa Minangkabau atau bahasa asing). Sedangkan untuk fungsi eufemisme tersebut ditemukan bahwa laki laki memakai ungkapan eufemisme untuk menjaga perasaan pendengar dari rasa malu dan bersalah sedangkan perempuan adalah untuk menghaluskan dan menjaga rasa kesopanan dengan mengganti kata tersebut seindah mungkin atau fungsi positif. Hasil penelitian ini membuktikan bahwa perempuan lebih ekspresif daripada laki laki dalam menggunakan ungkapan pelembut (eufemisme) dan bahasa Minangkabau lebih banyak menggunakan *semantic change* (perubahan makna asli).

Kata Kunci: Sociolinguistics, Euphemism, Minangkabaunese, Male and Female.

¹Mahasiswa penulis Skripsi Prodi Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris UNP untuk diwisuda periode September 2013

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A. Introduction

Language cannot be tossed in human lives because it is profoundly influential thing in making a good communication. It has developed rapidly in such way that people may notice various functions as well as intentions in using language. The existence of the language phenomena in society contains certain functions or purposes. The term sociolinguistics appear because this study concerns with describing language as use as social phenomenon and it attempts to establish casual links between language and society. Clearly, sociolinguistics is the study of how language and society has interrelationship (Crane et all:1981). Wardhaugh (1986:10) completes that statement by defining sociolinguistics as a study which is an attempt to find correlations between social structure and to observe any changes that occur. Leech (1974: 40) points out that language express the feeling and attitude of the speaker and writer. This means people tend to use language with many variations in order to deliver what they may mean and need and they may also use a smooth language by speak non-literally called figurative language.

Figurative language is a distinction in traditional system for analyzing language. Abram (1966:46) defines figurative language as a language which departs from what is taken to be standard construction, order, and significance of word in order to achieve special meaning or effect. The words or sentences which are uttered must be chosen as well and well interpretation to decrease or omit the dangerous effects to the speaker's language. To change the literal language to non-literal is good way to make good sense of speaking. It means human can use many ways to express their ideas, feeling and opinion through figurative language.

One part of figurative language is euphemism. In society, euphemism is useful to avoid the taboo words or to keep hearers' feeling. Hass (in Wardhaugh 1986:230) states that taboo is one way in which a society expresses the disapproval of certain kinds of behavior believed to be harmful to its members. That means the existence of taboo words and ideas motivates the creation of euphemism and when euphemism is used, the taboo words will be saved and euphemism has function to monitor and keep the meaning of language use. Moreover, Euphemism is used to hide unpleasant idea, even when the term for them is not necessarily offensive (Friedman in Sari, 2004: 09). Euphemism is defined as a word or expression that is used when people want to find a polite or less direct way of talking about difficult or embarrassing topics as death or bodily functions which are mostly changed in conversation. By using euphemism, it is believed that euphemism can replace the word or phrase to preserve the stability and keep social relationship among the society or community members. Euphemism exists in areas of daily life and communication which relates to society or communities members. To have euphemism, knowing the context or what in societies' mind are really necessary. It can be said euphemism is closely related to society perception. Wardhaugh (1986:10) divides three relationships between language and society. They are social structure may either influence or determine linguistic structure and/or

behavior, linguistics structure and/or behavior may either influence or determine social structure, and the influence of bi-directional.

The relationship of euphemism and society, shortly, can be attached and seen in one of social variables, namely gender. The use of euphemism will be different because of different gender. The fundamental reasons to this are male and female, as products of gender, have their own particular ways of speaking, choice of words, and rules for conversing. Gender which is mostly focused, concerns the psychological, social and cultural differences between males and females (Giddens in Coulmas: 1998). Generally speaking, male and female talk differently although there are varying degrees of masculine and feminine speech characteristics in each of people. The phenomenon happens toward Minangkabaunese as the local language, which is originally spoken and used by people in West Sumatera and is full of euphemism. This thesis discusses the differences in euphemism by male and female in Minangkabaunese. The differences can be looked as the following examples which tend to show the right differences between male and female in using euphemism in Minangkabaunese. Take a look to when male wants to go to toilet, they will speak "*malapor ciek lu*", or I go to report something, while female says "*sakik paruik a*" or I get stomachache. The other example is euphemism for fat. Male prefers to say "*semok, temok or agak barisi*" which means he or she is quite fat, in contrast, females often uses "chubby" borrowed from English which also means fat. These two examples have proved that at least male and female different in deciding euphemism and the first relationship between language and society which is social structure may either influence or determine linguistic structure and/or behavior is answered.

Gender is checked because male and female exactly differ because they have different characteristics of ability in vocalizing their language or they have different ways in choosing language. It will be useful to the reader in knowing how gender affects the euphemism use or how male and female differ in using euphemism in Minangkabaunese by looking its types and function.

B. Research Method

This research was a descriptive research. This method was chosen because it was intended to describe and consider to the truth or the fact of euphemism used by male and female. Selinger et al (1989:124) defines that a descriptive research involves a collection of techniques used to specify, delineate or descriptive naturally occurring phenomena without experimental manipulation. This type was acceptable in doing this analysis because this research analyzed and described the types and functions of euphemism used by male and female in Minangkabaunese.

The data of this research were recorded data which were sentences, phrases and words of euphemism. The informants of this research were males and females who did conversation by using Minangkabau language. The data were on April, May and June 2013.

In this research, the data were collected by using several techniques. First was recording the daily conversation of males and females who speak by using Minangkabau language. Second was transcribing the spoken data into written data.

The researcher transcribed all of spoken data into written data orthographically. Finally, the researcher just took the sentences, the phrases and the words which consisted euphemisms.

C. Finding and Discussion

1. Male's euphemism

A: *Ooo.. ba smsan, iaaa.. sariawan sakik e lai, pantang*

Ooo., sent message, iaaa, oral ulceration sick very, *pantang*

'Ooo, you sent him a message, iaaaa. I have oral ulceration. It really hurts me, *pantang*'

B: *Wak suruah bali abotil, gaek ndak amuah abotil do*

I order buy abothyl, name not want abothyl

'I ask you to buy an abothyl, you refuse it'

Pantang is euphemism since the word is substitution of a mild and pleasant expression for harsh and blunts one. This word can preserve the stability and keep social relationship among the society or community members. *Pantang* refers to bad connotation and euphemism of woman's part of body. Males use *pantang* when they are in bad mood or hate toward something. It is sweet-sounding, or inoffensive, alternatives for expressions that males prefer not to use in executing a particular communicative intention on a given occasion. *Pantang* belongs to phonological distortion because this word has been distorted the pronunciation of word. The real word for this case is *pantek*, but the letter 'e' is replaced to 'a' whose function is to neutralize the vulgar word or to prevent unwanted connotation or function of taboo. The replacement has created the alternatives of choosing the right words for vulgar words and it seems altogether grander.

2. Female's euphemism

A: *Mawar e dapek lo tu, tapi ndak do tando e, duo bulan ko alah dapek pitih apo tu mah*

Name possessive get also that, but not there sign, two months this got money what that

'Mawar also get, but there is no sign, it has been two months he got money'

B: *Aaa tam mawar e tu ndak lo ditaga' an e doh?*

Aaa name her that not also stood she

'Aaaa her uncle (tam mawar), is there something he unstood?'

A: *ndak ado doh.*

Not there

'No, he is not'

B: *a tapi angah buruak tu mintak tanah?*

A but name (possessive) that request land
 ‘Angah buruak requests a land, as people report?’

A: *ntah .. tau bu doh..*

Huhh know mother
 ‘huh? I don’t know’

A: *ka Tam Cobong.*

To name
 ‘To tam cobong’

Euphemism in this conversation is *ditaga’an* because it softens the potentially offensive effects of an unpleasant word or sentence to preserve social harmony in communication. The unpleasant sentence that is meant is “*lah dapek pitih tapi alun juo babangun ruamh tu lai*” or he has got the money, but he is reluctant to build a house. It is indirection one because this euphemism tends to refer to touchy topics or terms which may be alluded to in various ways by mentioning one aspect of the subjects, a circumstance also involved in this word, or it can be said as a related subject. *Ditaga’an* is one of the verbs which is indirectly one of the aspects in building a house. The function of this word is to mild, refine and keep the polite speech in order to change the word in expressing an idea or positive function.

Table 2.1 Types of Euphemism Used by Males and Females in Minangkabaunese

No.	Types of Euphemism	Males	Females
		Frequency	Frequency
1.	Shortening		
	1. Abbreviation	6	1
	2. Apocopation	0	0
	3. Back Formation	0	0
	4. Diminutive	0	0
	5. Omission	0	1
	6. Clipping	1	1
2.	7. Circumlocution	0	1
3.	Remodelling		
	8. Phonological Distortion	3	4
	9. Blending	0	1
	10. Reduplication	1	0
4.	Semantic Change		
	11. Semantic Shift	17	9
	12. Metaphorical Transfer	18	9
	13. Widening	6	4
	14. Litotes	6	7
	15. Understatement	16	4
	16. Indirection	20	12

	17. abstraction	8	2
5.	Borrowing		
	18. External Borrowing	40	18
	19. Internal Borrowing	2	3
Total		143	78

Table 2.2 Functions of Euphemism Used by Males and Females in Minangkabaunese

No.	Functions of Euphemism	Male	Female
		Frequency	Frequency
1.	To neutralize the vulgar word or to prevent unwanted connotation or function of taboo.	8	5
2.	To protect someone groups of people from the feeling of shame or cover up function	73	30
3.	To mild, refine and keep the polite speech in order to change the word in expressing idea or positive function	62	43
Total		143	78

In general, euphemism is defined as a smooth language that is used to avoid the taboo words or unpleasant subject and substitute them into mild or even beautiful words to keep social relationships among speakers and hearers. It is one of language styles that is influenced by culture and culture decides their attitude, behavior and personality of the society. Besides, in knowing euphemism characteristic; types and function especially, context is also necessary to see how unpleasant or taboo words conceal in the sentence even they are not substantively euphemism. The phenomena of euphemism using also happens in Minangkabaunese which is known as full of indirect speech. The society, males and females, are identified to know how much euphemism play in their conversation. This research is to see the types of euphemism which are mostly used by male and female and to see the values (function) toward that.

In the finding of the research, researcher found there were thirteen types of euphemism that male used and fifteen used by female. The researcher found that external borrowing was mostly used by male and female. For example, the word *Aktifis* (*pegiat*) which comes from male conversation or **activist** is borrowed from foreign language. *Aktifis* means someone who cares and acts to his nation wheter it is a government policy, problems or everything which he thinks bad to the cirizen. This word is taken from foreign language aims to hide the truth. It replaces the name or the identity of someone about one attitude that he has.

Aktifis is substituted for one that is somehow disturbing to listener. Hence, *aktifis* is euphemism because it used to hide unpleasant idea, even when the term for them is not necessarily offensive. To borrow the words from other languages which less freighted is a good way to conceal a harsh reality. In this type, males had forty of euphemisms that belong to external borrowing, and eighteen for females.

The use of external borrowing signed that as Indonesia has, Minangkabauese is also rich of borrowing word. This type is commonly used to get a high prestige or high social level. It is right that the existence of English or other languages of these euphemisms influence the thought of the hearer. External borrowing is mostly used by educated person whether they are in economic, politic, social, or even education. External borrowing words which are mostly found in male and female euphemism is from English. One of reasons for this occasion is because English now becomes international language which is powerful in the world and whoever use this language can be said as an advance community. Then, English is now spread toward education or academic process, printing press, or even economic and political issues. When male and female wants to conceal something, they use external borrowing in order to diminish the difficulty of articulating undesirable words.

Other example of types of euphemism that are mostly used by male and female in Minangkabauese was indirection. One of the examples comes from female's conversation that produce the word *ditaga' an* because it softens the potentially offensive effects of an unpleasant word or sentence to preserve social harmony in communication. The unpleasant sentence that is meant is "*lah dapek pitih tapi alun juo babangun rumah tu lai*" or he has got the money, but he is reluctant to build a house. This sentence will make a harsh reality and it makes a frightened expression from the hearer or audience. It belongs to euphemism because one because this euphemism tends to refer a touchy topics or terms which may be alluded to in various ways by mentioning one aspect of the subjects, a circumstance also involve to this word, or it can be said as a related subject. The frequencies that male and female used this euphemism were twenty to males and twelve to females.

Furthermore, there were metaphorical transfer and semantic shift that males and females mostly used. Males had eighteen and seventeen of metaphorical transfer and semantic shift, female in contrary, had nine. One of the examples can be seen in female's communication which produce metaphorical transfer from the sentence *konslet kini lampu ko mah*. This is categorized as euphemism because this expression tends to replace language that people prefer to avoid using. It is also an implied meaning, defensive nature, offsetting the power of tabooed terms and otherwise eradicating from the language everything that people prefer not deal with directly. *Konslet lampu* or commonly called *lampu konslet* refers to the lamp that cannot alive anymore because of electrical devices problem. *Konslet* is actually borrowing word which is borrowed from Dutch "Kortsluiting" which is also used for electrical problem. Based on the context, this euphemism is used to replace a taboo word "*gila*" (crazy) or someone who is far from her wish. This euphemism belongs to metaphorical transfer because *lampu*

konslet is connotatively reflects to attitude, emotion, value or judgement of the speaker. She tries to make a comparison of things (human being and lamp) that belongs to connotative meaning.

Then, there were also found the other difference between male and female euphemism. In male's euphemism there was reduplication type that female did not use. It comes from word "*saiyo sakato*" or translated as something that goes together. Reduplication is the type which repeats a syllable or letter of a word that often employed as an equivocal alternative to a dispreferred expression. Based on the data, it is proved that male allows speakers to reflect their implicit reluctance to share personal information. By this purpose, speakers do not openly refuse to answer, but they follow an informal strategy through vague expressions in the form of reduplication in order to convince the first syllable, or may be just make a pleasure language and hide the unpleasant expression. Moreover, euphemistic reduplications can minimalize condition among people using language on critical topics. The result showed that female is lack in a critical topic and their euphemism is less of repeated word. The existence of blending, omission and circumlocution which male didn't had, conclude that female's euphemism is full of shortening or shortened word. Female preferred not to mention something that might be offend someone by producing new words in the same part of speech and it will be fresh to the hearer. The words like "*M*", *Curhat*, "*Lowek Lowek I*" and "*sok waw*" have proved that at least female's style is richer than male. They have particular ways to decrease offensive expression from hearer by having shortening and circumlocution.

In addition, in these data, it was not found apocoptation, back formation and diminutive as types of euphemism. It is because male and female's euphemistic vocabularies are limited toward these types. It proved that Minangkabauese is rare to focus on omitting one of syllables, substituting one part of speech, and adding a suffix to indicate affection or smallness. These three types are rather to have affixation while Minangkabauese is lack of affixation in producing euphemism.

The other finding that researcher found in this research is the function of euphemism used by male and female in Minangkabauese. The function are divided into three categories, they are (1) to neutralize the vulgar word or to prevent unwanted connotation or function of taboo, (2) is to mild, refine and keep the polite speech in order to change the word in expressing idea or positive function, and (3) to protect someone groups of people from feeling of shame and guilty or cover up function. Researcher found the third function was mostly used by males and the second function was mostly used by females. It signs that male and females, even they have similar types of euphemism they might or might not different in the function given. It comes to phonological distortion process. Male had *pantang*, female had *fifis*. *Pantang* belongs to phonological distortion because this word has been distorted the pronunciation of word. The real word for this case is *pantek*, but the letter 'e' is replaced to 'a' whose function is to neutralize the vulgar word or to prevent unwanted connotation or function of taboo. The replacement has created the alternatives of choosing the right words

for vulgar words and it seems altogether grander. On the other hand, *fifis* is also phonological distortion because speaker distorts the pronunciation of words. She changes the letter P become F to make modification and alteration of the form of the offensive words according to certain rules. However, the function of this euphemism is to mild, refine and keep the polite speech in order to change the word in expressing idea or positive function, not to protect like *pantang* suggests.

From those functions, male's euphemism was rather to protect someone groups of people from the feeling of shame or cover up function. Their priority is to make a good relationship with the hearer or audience even they prefer to say the fact, like or not, agree or disagree and others to show up their status in environment. They focus on how the euphemism can be fitted with hearer's social background. On the other hand, female was rather to mild, refine and keep the polite speech in order to change the word in expressive idea or positive function. It can be said female tends to make a smooth language by establishing equality, supporting others, promoting participant and responsiveness. Then, other function; to neutralize the vulgar word or to prevent unwanted communication or function of taboo is a little to be found in male and female's euphemisms. It is proved that Minangkabaunese euphemism is lack in vulgar word. It refers that male and female were not interested on discussing vulgar words or there are limited words or sentences toward them.

D. Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the data analysis, research findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the research is concluded that types and function which were mostly produced by male and female in Minangkabaunese quite similar. However, they were different in function even they are in same types.

Males had forty one of external borrowing, the type which was mostly used and females had eighteen which was also mostly used. Then, male had indirection, metaphorical transfer, semantic shift, understatement, while female had indirection, metaphorical transfer, semantic shift, litotes, etc. (see findings). The function that was mostly used by male was to protect someone groups of people from feeling of shame and guilty or cover up function, while female rather had the function to mild, refine and keep the polite speech in order to change the word in expressing idea or positive function.

Furthermore, there were also found the other difference between male and female euphemism. In male's euphemism there was reduplication type that female did not use. Then, in female's euphemism there were circumlocution and omission that male did not use.

In conclusion, the data has proved that Minangkabaunese had semantic change type as the strongest one and most of sentences or words were in an indirect one. Shortening and circumlocution were rarely used in Minangkabaunese, and remodeling is in average.

This research was conducted in order to know the types and functions of euphemism used by male and female in Minangkabaunese. There are several topics that can be studied about euphemism. Therefore, the researcher suggest to next

researchers to continue this topic or make it as a relevance research in order to develop better knowledge about euphemism.

As long the process of collecting data, the researcher found that it is really important to give more attention toward euphemism in Minangkabau. It can be studied on pragmatics point of view, anthropological linguistic point of view, or even psychological linguistic point of view. The data can be taken from written data; newspaper, magazines, internet sources, and spoken data. This is the one of interesting topics in linguistics because it can decide how polite the members of society are.

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