



Semantic Structure of Javanese Verb 'to cut': Natural Semantics Metalanguage Analysis

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Abstract

The verb 'to cut' in Javanese is an interesting verb to study. This is because the tools, the objects, the way it is use, and the results will affect the selection of the lexicon used. This qualitative descriptive study focuses on describing the semantic structure of the verb 'to cut' in Javanese using the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) approach which was initiated by Wierzbicka (1996) using one of the theoretical concepts of NSM. The source of the data was obtained from the intuition of the researcher as a native speaker of the Javanese language assisted by using the *Bausastra Jawa* dictionary and *Kamus Bahasa Jawa - Bahasa Indonesia I*. The data analysis technique used four steps including determining the original meaning, deriving meaning, determining polysemy, and paraphrasing meaning. The results of the research show that there are 12 lexicons 'to cut' in Javanese which have close meanings, i.e., *nyukur*, *nyunati*, *mbeleh*, *nguliti*, *nugel*, *nggraji*, *negor*, *mbabat*, *ngrajang*, *nyacah*, *nyuwek* and *nggunting*, which are then grouped into 6 categories based on the object.

Keywords: *semantics structure, natural semantic metalanguage, verb to cut*

INTRODUCTION

Every language has a variety of lexicons, as found in the Java language. The varied vocabulary in the Javanese language in expressing a certain activity is one of the elements of this research which is interesting to study further, for example the verb 'to hit' '*memukul*' in Javanese is *ngeplak* and *ngetak*, these variety of lexicon which shows that hitting activity is considered from the way of hitting. The two words are variations of the hit lexicon, but have different ways. The word *ngeplak* has the concept of hitting with an open hand and body or torso becomes the target, while *ngetak* is done by clenching the hand aimed at the head. The variation verb 'to cut' in Javanese is one of the important points that the researcher considers in conducting this research.

The verb cutting in Javanese implemented into several lexicons that have close meanings, for example the verbs *ngrajang* and *nyacah*. Both of these words have the meaning of cutting vegetables as the object. According to the meaning component, there is no difference in meaning between the two, but if we analyzed more deeply there are differences between the two, namely in the results that are cut. The word *ngrajang* interprets cutting activity with a pattern that tends to be measured, on the other hand *nyacah* has an irregular pattern, so that the results of the cut are also irregular. This closeness of meaning then needs to be analyzed using natural semantic metalanguage as an approach so that the meaning of the lexicon can be described properly and clearly.

Verhaar (Pateda, 2001: 7) explains that semantics studies meaning. Another explanation regarding semantics is also expressed by Chaer (1990: 39) as word forms have different meanings. Through this difference, the meaning of the lexicon can be studied through a natural semantic metalanguage (NSM) approach. The Natural semantics metalanguage or NSM was initiated by Anna Wierzbicka (1996) by emphasizing the concept of true meaning, polysemy and syntactic meaning based on the universality of language as an instrument to be analyzed. The theory that plays a role in analyzing meaning is simplified by placing the original meaning as a reference or benchmark. The actual meaning becomes the initial reference in a study of the meaning of language, which will not change the meaning of language even with cultural elements. This is because this theory examines what is the basic reflection of the human mind from birth, so that cultural and social elements cannot influence the meaning of the language studied.

Goddard revealed that the original meaning of the verb 'to cut' is formed from the original meaning of doing/happening, in other words if X does something to Y, something happens to Y. Another basic concept of NSM theory is polysemy, where there is a relation of meaning between words in one lexeme with other words. There are variations in the meaning of a word. In this study, the authors divide polysemy cutting based on the intended object, i.e objects in the form of 1) humans, 2) animals, 3) plants, 4) wood, 5) vegetables, fruit, and meat, 6) cloth, plastic, and paper. The NSM concepts that have been described are analytical tools in examining the meaning of the verb 'to cut' in Javanese so that the differences in meaning between words can be described well and clearly.

The difference in the meaning of language in each vocabulary becomes an interesting linguistic discussion, because each vocabulary has several variations of meaning that can be studied based on its language function. Among several previous studies that became a reference was Widani (2016) which examined the meaning of 'to take' the Balinese language. There are 14 lexicon 'to take' found in the Balinese language, among them: *nyemak/ngambil*, *nyuang*, *nyurud*, *nuduk*, *ngalap*, *nimba*, *ngotèk*, *nyèndok*, *ngarebut*, *nyopèt*, *ngarampok*, *nyambrèt*, *ngamaling* dan *ngutil/ngalamit*. Furthermore, another research on the Balinese language was carried out by Budiasa (2011) regarding 'to cut' lexicon, where there are 29 'to cut' lexicon with two meaning divisions, first the verb 'to cut' does not use tools and second the verb 'to cut' uses tools with one action prototype. Another results show that there is one original meaning 'to do' : 'cut' and also the verb's syntactic pattern i.e., X does something to Y and Y is cut off by X.

Another study using NSM approach was conducted by Dewi, Mulyadi and Pujiono (2019) who studied the semantic structure of the verb 'to cut' in Kiru language. The results of the study found that there were 21 lexicons meaning cut which was divided into two categories, 1) 'X do something to someone which was divided into two subcategories, i.e., 'X do something to someone with something' and X' did something to someone in certain time'. 2) 'X do something to something' which is divided into two subcategories, i.e., X' do something to something with something' and 'X do something to something in a certain time'.

Another study was conducted by Rahardian (2021) regarding the semantic structure of dental activity verbs in Javanese. These verbs contain the original meaning of doing/happening, which is then grouped into the semantic components of chewing, breaking, biting, carrying, and releasing. Rahardian found 23 lexicons of cutting in the Javanese language, namely *mamah*, *ngilut*, *ngenyoh*, *nggayem*, *ngemah*, *nginang*,

nggondol, nyakot/nyokot, nggeget, ngeret, ngerot, nyathèk, ngerah, nyekit, nyisil, ngrokot, ngrikot, mbrakot, nglethak, nglethuk, nglethus, ngremus, dan nglethik.

Another study was conducted by Raynold (2014) about the structure of the verb 'to cut' in Kei language. This study uses natural semantic metalanguage as a basic theoretical reference in analyzing the data. The results of his research show that there are 10 'to cut' lexicon in Kei language, i.e., *avat, titat, kek, kiq, wur, rouk, vnge, isin, itan* dan *uvur*. In addition, this lexicon is grouped into 3; instruments used, how to cut and the results. Furthermore, Loe (2015) examined the verb 'to cut' in Rote language with the Dengka dialect using the NSM approach. The findings show that there are 11 lexicon whose meanings are close to 'to cut' in Indonesian, i.e., *soe, oʔoti, gute, baʔe, tati, unga, teta, gaʔe, ete, faʔa, and pa.*

Based on several previous studies, the study of the verb 'to cut' has been studied by several regional languages in Indonesia, but there has been no research on verb 'to cut' in Javanese which focuses on the object that being cut. Therefore, this study aims to determine the variations of the Javanese 'to cut' lexicon which have close meanings which are then grouped based on the intended object. It is hoped that the results of this research can make a positive contribution or novelty in micro linguistics as well as in terms of the meaning and use of the Javanese language.

METHOD

This study is a type of qualitative descriptive research that analyzes the semantic structure of the verb 'to cut' in Javanese. This study analyzes descriptive data in the form of verbs, both written and verbal, as well as observable behavior. The type of data in this study is secondary data obtained from Javanese language dictionaries, namely *Bausastra Jawa* and Javanese - Indonesian Language Dictionary I. The stages that the writer goes through in this research are data collection, data analysis, and presentation of results. In collecting data, the writer uses the sorting and note-taking method obtained through the *Bausastra Jawa* dictionary and the Javanese - Indonesian Dictionary I. Apart from the two dictionaries, the author also uses intuitive or introspective reflective data collection techniques, because the author is a native speaker of the Javanese language.

Regarding the data analysis technique, the author uses several analytical steps according to the natural semantic metalanguage, i.e., determining the original meaning, looking for the derivation of meaning, determining polysemy based on the object, and describing the meaning of each data. In analyzing the data, the researcher uses NSM theory that proposed by Wierzbicka (1996) by paraphrasing Javanese sentences to find complex semantic meanings. After the meaning is found, the researcher explains the meaning structure with natural semantic metalanguage theory and explains the different meanings seen from the instruments used, the mway it used and the results obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The verb 'to cut' in Javanese is implemented in 12 variations of the lexicon which will then be classified into 6 categories based on the intended object. The categories are (1) human objects, *nyukur* and *nyunat*, (2) animal objects, *mbeleh* and *nguliti*, (3) wooden objects, *nugel* and *nggraji* (4) Plant objects, *negor* and *mbabat* (5) Vegetable objects and meat, *ngrajang* and *nyacah* (6) Objects of cloth, plastic & paper, *nyuwek* and *nggunting*.

RESULTS

Based on the semantic structure of the verb 'to cut' in Javanese comes from the original meaning of doing/happening with several components contained. These components include agents symbolized as X 'someone/something', patients symbolized as Y 'someone/something' and instruments symbolized by Z. So that paraphrasing the meaning obtained 'someone/something X does something to someone/something Y by using something Z so that something happens to someone/something Y. Here is a description 'to cut' lexicon based on natural semantic metalanguage theory:

3.1 Human Object

The verb 'to cut' in Javanese on objects in the form of parts of the human body is divided into two lexicon, i.e., *nyukur* and *nyunat*. Lexicon *nyukur* 'shaving' shows a small object in the form of fur or hair with the use of tools such as a shaving machine or scissors, while the word *nyunat* 'circumcision' is used on the human body at the tip of the genitals or foreskin by using a tool in the form of scissors. These two words cannot be exchanged for each other, exemplified as follows.

sek, aku tak nyunat rambute bocah kui
'Wait a minute, I want to circumcise the child's hair'

The example above is an unacceptable sentence, because circumcision should be used with objects in the form of human genitals. Although the two lexicons have similarities in the use of tools, if the target object is different, the use of the lexicon will also be different. The following are examples of accepted sentences from both lexicon.

- (a) *Aku nyukur rambutku wingi dino minggu.*
I shaved my hair last sunday.
- (b) *Kerjaane dulurku nyunat bocah cilik.*
'My brother's job is to circumcise a little boy'

The difference between *nyukur* and *nyunat* lexicon can be applied as follows.

The explication of Nyukur

X does something to the Y part (hair/fur)
At the same time something happened to Y
X uses something Z (scissors/shaving machine)
X does this many times
Y become pieces
X wants this
X does this way

The explication of Nyunat

X does something to the Y part (tip of the genitals)
At the same time something happened to Y
X uses something Z (scissors)
Y become two parts
X wants this
X does this way

3.2 Animal Object

The verb 'to cut' in Javanese on objects in the form of animal parts is divided into two lexicon, *mbeleh* and *nguliti*. The word *mbeleh* 'slaughter' requires that the object of the neck of a living animal in the form of a buffalo, cow, goat, etc. with a knife, while *nguliti* 'slaughter' requires that the object be the skin of an animal that already dead using a knife. The use of these two words is not interchangeable. These two words have the same exponent, namely, X which is the actor, Y as the object of action and Z the tool used. Here are example sentences from the two lexicon.

- (c) *Umat islam saben idul adha mbeleh wedhus.*
'Muslims every Eid al-Adha slaughter a goat.'
- (d) *Ardan, ojo lali nguliti sapi iki!*
'Ardan, don't forget to skin this cow!'

The difference between the *mbeleh* and *nguliti* lexicon can be expressed through explication as follows.

The explication of Mbeleh

X does something to Y (neck of buffalo, cow, goat)
At the same time something happened to Y
X uses something Z (knife)
Y moves as desired X
Y become two parts (not completely separated)
Y becomes dead
X wants this
X does this way

The explication of Nguliti

X does something to Y (buffalo, cow, goat skin)
X did this after Y died
At the same time something happened to Y
X used something Z (knife) for some time
Y's body with Y's (skin) being separated [M]
X wants this
X does this way

3.3 Wooden Object

The Javanese 'to cut' lexicon on wooden objects refers to two lexicon, *nugel* and *nggraji*. Lexicon *nugel* 'breaking' requires objects such as tree branches, wood or objects using a hand instrument, while the *nggraji* lexicon 'saws' requires objects in the form of wood using a saw. This action is done by pressing the tip of the saw to the object then pulling back or pushing forward repeatedly. This causes Y to be cut into pieces according to X's wishes. From these two lexicon there are differences in the tools used, but there are similarities in the exponents, namely X does something to Y (wood) using Z (saw/both hands) is done in a certain way so that Y into two/multiple parts. Here are example sentences from the two lexicon.

- (e) *Bapakku wingi nesu nesu nganti nugel sapu.*
'My father was angry yesterday until he break the broom.'
- (f) *Yusup jek nggraji kayu mahoni.*
'Yusuf is still sawing mahogany.'

The difference between *nugel* and *nggraji* lexicon can be expressed by explication as follows.

The explicatiosn of Nugel

X does something to Y which is long [M] (wood)
At the same time something happened to Y
X using Z (barehand)
Y moves as desired X
Y into two parts (runs apart)
X wants this
X did something like this

The explicatiosn of Nggraji

X does something to Y (wood, bamboo, pipe)
At the same time something happened to Y
X using Z (saw)
Y moves as desired X
Y into two parts (runs apart)
X wants this
X did something like this

3.4 Plant Object

In plant objects the verb 'to cut' is used for elements of trees or weeds with two lexicon, *negor* and *mbabat*. The word *negor* 'to cut' requires that the object be in the form of a tree trunk and using a tree cutting machine or an axe. *Negor* is used in the context of plants that have large trunks, such as trees. Meanwhile, the word *mbabat* 'to cut' requires that the object be in the form of shrubs, small trees or weeds by using a tool such as a sickle. There are differences in the object of using the lexicon where *mbabat* refers to a small tree or weed that has a smaller size than the *Negor* object. Example sentences from the two lexicon can be seen in the following sentences.

(g) *Pas kerja bakti, tonggoku negor wit-wit gedi.*

'During community service, my neighbor cut down the big trees.'

(h) *Indra mbabat alang-alang mergo dalane raiso dilewati.*

'Indra penetrated the reeds because the road was impassable.'

The difference between *negor* and *mbabat* lexicon can be expressed by explication as follows.

The explicatiosn of Negor

X does something to the trunk [M] Y (tree)
At the same time something happened to Y
X uses Z (chainsaw, axe)
Y into parts
X wants this
X did something like this

The explicatiosn of Mbabat

X does something to Y (bush, small tree, weeds)
At the same time something happened to Y
X uses Z (sickle, machete)

Y into multiple parts
X wants this
X did something like this

3.5 Vegetable and Meat Object

In terms of vegetables and meat, the verb 'to cut' in Javanese is divided into two lexicon, *ngrajang* and *nyacah*. These two lexicons are commonly used in the cooking process. Lexicon *ngrajang* 'to slice' requires a small object in the form of vegetables or meat using an instrument in the form of a knife with a regular pattern, while the lexicon *nyacah* 'to slice' requires an object in the form of vegetables or meat using an instrument in the form of a knife with a random pattern or irregular. The pattern of cutting activity on vegetables and meat objects is a differentiator from the use of the cutting lexicon in Javanese. Examples of sentences from the two lexicon can be seen in the following sentences.

- (i) *Ibu jek ngrajang wortel kanggo masak.*
'Mom is still slicing carrots for cooking.'
- (j) *Rip, ojo lali nyacah daginge yo!*
'Rip, don't forget to slice the meat, okay?.'

The difference between *ngrajang* and *nyacah* lexicon can be expressed by explication as follows.

The explicatiosn of Ngrajang

X does something to Y (vegetables/meat)
At the same time something happened to Y
X using Z (kitchen knife)
Y into small measured parts [M]
X wants this
X did something like this

The explicatiosn of Nyacah

Someone X does something to Y (vegetables/meat)
At the same time something happened to Y
X using Z (kitchen knife)
Y into small irregular parts [M]
X wants this
X did something like this

3.6 Cloth, Plastic, and Paper Object

Verb 'to cut' in Javanese on small and thin objects, such as cloth, plastic and paper, are divided into two lexicon, *nyuwek* and *nggunting*. The lexicon *nyuwek* 'tearing' requires objects in the form of paper, plastic, and cloth using instruments such as hands or teeth. Furthermore, the lexicon *nggunting* 'cutting' requires small, inanimate objects in the form of paper, plastic, cloth using a tool in the form of scissors. The difference between these two lexicon lies in the instrument used. Here are example sentences from the two lexicon.

- (k) *Adiku senengane nyuwek bukuku.*
'My sister likes to tear my book.'
- (l) *Nek nggunting kertas mbok sing rapi sitik!*

'if you cut out a little neat please'

The difference between *nyuwek* and *nggunting* lexicon can be expressed by explication as follows.

The explicatiosn of Nyuwek

X does something to Y that is long [M] (paper, plastic, cloth)

At the same time something happened to Y

X does something (both hands/tooth)

Y became apart

X wants this

X did something like this

The explicatiosn of Nggunting

X does something to Y (paper, plastic, cloth)

At the same time something happened to Y

X doing with something (scissors)

Y became apart

X wants this

X did something like this

Discussion

Based on the results of the research described above, the semantic structure of the verb 'to cut' in Javanese has twelve lexicons that have close meanings between words. The findings are then grouped based on the elements involved, in this case the Javanese language has six objects in the semantic structure of the verb cutting; (1) the human object with the lexicon *nyukur* and *nyunat*. In the human object, the verb 'to cut' in Javanese is used for the object of hair or hair in humans. The natural semantic metalanguage of this object shows the division of two components of the meaning of cut which can be used in speech or writing by Javanese people. In addition, in the discussion above, the use of explication as a medium has been described to simplify the original meaning so that the meaning of the verb 'to cut' can be conveyed in detail and clearly.

Next, (2) animal objects with *mbeleh* and *nguliti* lexicon. In this object, it is found that two components of meaning are indicated by the verb 'to cut', i.e., *mbeleh* 'slaughter' which requires the neck object of a living animal in the form of a buffalo, cow, and goat using a knife, while *nguliti* 'slaughter' requires an object in the form of animal skin who already dead using a knife. The use of the verb cut in this object indicates the use of tools in the object. In addition, the context of using the two lexicon *mbeleh* and *nguliti* should not be exchanged.

And then (3) wooden objects with *nugel* and *nggraji* lexicon. In this object, the difference in the use of the lexicon is on the object itself, such as *nugel* which is used for wood or trees that are not too tall, do not have hard stems, or can be used for weeds or grass. Then *nggraji* is used to hard and strong tree object into two parts. Next, (4) plant objects with *negor* and *mbabat* lexicon. In this object, the verb to cut has two components of meaning where *negor* 'to cut' requires the object to be a tree trunk and to use a tree cutting machine or an axe. *Negor* is used in the context of plants that have large trunks, such as trees. Meanwhile, the word *mbabat* 'to penetrate' requires that the object be in the form of shrubs, small trees or weeds by using a tool such as a sickle. There are differences in the object of using the lexicon where *mbabat* refers to a small tree or weed that has a smaller size than the *Negor* object.

The object of vegetables and meat (5) with the lexicon *ngrajang* and *nyacah*. In this object, the verb cut in Javanese has two meaning components which are used to explain the activity pattern that occurs in vegetables and meat. The lexicon *ngrajang* 'thinly slicing' requires a small object in the form of vegetables or meat using an instrument in the form of a knife with a regular pattern, while the *nyacah* 'thinly slicing' lexicon requires an object in the form of vegetables or meat using an instrument in the form of a knife with a random pattern.

Next, (6) the objects of cloth, plastic and paper with the lexicon *nyuwek* and *nggunting*. In this object, the verb to cut in Javanese has two components of lexicon meaning, namely *nyuwek* and *nggunting*. The lexicon *nyuwek* 'tearing' requires objects in the form of paper, plastic, and cloth using instruments such as hands or teeth. Furthermore, the lexicon *nggunting* 'cutting' requires small, inanimate objects in the form of paper, plastic, cloth using a tool in the form of scissors. So, the difference lies in the instruments used in doing the cutting activity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the verb cutting in Javanese is formed from the original meaning of doing/happening which contains the exponent agent symbolized by X 'someone/something', patient symbolized as Y 'someone/something' and instrument symbolized by Z. There are 12 cutting lexicons in Javanese which have close meanings between words which are then grouped based on the object they are subjected to, i.e., 1) the human object with the *nyukur* and *nyunat* lexicon. 2) Animal objects with *mbeleh* and *nguliti* lexicon. 3) Wooden objects with *nugel* and *nggraji* lexicon. 4) Plant objects with *negor* and *mbabat* lexicon. 5) Vegetables and meat objects with the lexicon *ngrajang* and *nyacah*. 6) Objects of cloth, plastic and paper with the lexicon *nyuwek* and *nggunting*.

The meaning of the lexicon of the 12 lexicon can be viewed from several aspects; 1) the object that is applied, 2) the instrument used, 3) the way it used, and 4) the results. This can be known by describing each lexicon using a Natural Semantic Metalanguage analysis, so that the results obtained can be conveyed clearly. As time goes by, language will always develop and evolve which is then expected for further researchers to dig deeper into the meaning of a language.

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