



An Analysis of the Meaning in Euphemism Used by Sikka Krowe Ethnic in Habi Village Sikka Regency

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ABSTRACTS

The present research is about the meaning of euphemism used by Sikka Krowe ethnic in Habi village Sikka regency. There are two problems to be answered in this writing, namely what are the meanings of the euphemism used by Sikka Krowe ethnic in Habi village? and why people of Sikka Krowe Ethnic who live in Habi village use Euphemism?. The aims of this study are to describe the meanings of the euphemism used by Sikka Krowe ethnic in Habi village and to describe the reasons of Sikka Krowe ethnic who live in Habi village use the euphemism. This study used a descriptive method. Descriptive method is used to describe or to define the condition of the object or subject of the research. The data was gathered through observation and interview. The result of the research show that (1) there are two types of meaning namely conceptual meaning and associative meaning, (2) in terms of the reason why people of Sikka Krowe ethnic used euphemism, there are two reasons of the using of euphemism in Sikka Krowe ethnic. First is because the speaker wants to talk politely and the second is because the speaker wants to escape their self from the dangerous thing of speaks the taboo or forbidden things directly.

Keywords: *the meaning, euphemism*

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1. Introduction

In every aspect of human life, especially in the case of human relationship, language is the most effective means of communication. The reason is that, without language, humans cannot express their ideas, feelings, emotion, et cetera. Therefore, it is correct to say that language is the most effective medium for human communication. Dealing with the use of language as the most effective for human communication, there is none superior to language in communicative flexibility, power, and ability to meet variety of human needs. The use of language as a system of mediation is intended not only to uncover their mental image, world view, and self-perceptions, but also to construct their vision on socio-cultural reality. This implies that, as a medium for communication, language is closely related to culture (Palmer, 1996: 4).

When we involved in a communication with someone, we must also use the good words and avoid the unpleasant or offensive expressions, in the other words the communicator must use the polite ways of communication, so all of the communicators can have a good communication. To avoid the unpleasant or offensive expressions, we should use euphemisms so we can stay away from the bad or unpleasant words that can endanger one to another or can cause the debate even the quarrel.

A language without euphemisms would be a defective instrument of communication (Haddad 2009: 41). This is because when we take a part in a communication without using any appropriate words to replace any taboo or unpleasant words, the other's feelings are hurt and we might be labeled as

the bad persons and finally the communication that we build can cause the bad thing like debate.

The word of "euphemism" originates from Greek, *euphemismos*. *Eu* means good and *phemism* means speech. Therefore, euphemism means to speak fairly or a good speech (Azkiyah 2008:1). Euphemism as a word or phrase that replaces a taboo word or serves to avoid frightening or unpleasant subject. He also says that euphemism in used because there is a prohibition on the use of, mention of, or association with particular objects or person (Fromkin cited in Nilwati, 2012: 51).

There are many concepts of euphemisms. According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, a euphemism is a vague expression that is used to conceal a harsh reality. In effect, euphemisms reduce precision of thought. Euphemism refers to certain things which are not said. In other words for taboo words people replaces them by using other words to refer the same meanings and the alternative words are usually clear and acceptable by all members of society (Wardaugh cited in Azkiyah, 2008: 10). Euphemisms are alternative to dispreferred expressions and are used to avoid possible loss of face. The dispreferred expression may be taboo, fearsome, distasteful, or those which have too many negative connotations to felicitously execute speaker's communicative intention on a given occasion (Allan and Burridge in Thawabteh, 2012: 147). Euphemism is an expression that refers to something that people hesitate to mention to avoid causing offences, but which lessens the offensiveness by referring indirectly in some way (Cruse cited in Epoge, 2013: 1). A euphemism is a word

or phrase that is used in place of a disagreeable or offensive term. Euphemisms are used to hide unpleasant idea, even when the term for them is not necessarily offensive (Friedman in Azkiyah 2008:11).

Euphemism as a language phenomenon has some special characteristics. Almost in all cultures there are things strongly forbidden by social customs. Generally, people try to avoid mentioning to taboos directly. When the taboos (the forbidden things) have to be referred to, it is likely to the person to substitute it with the expressions that sound better (Nilwati 2012:52). Each culture has its own values, habits, customs and taboos. Euphemism is used to be polite in impolite situations or to maintain one's face. Maintaining one's face, therefore, is common between the speaker and the hearer. Whenever we are in an interaction, we are expected not to be offensive or be offended by others (Yule in Epoge 2013:4).

The use of euphemism is one of real example of sociolinguistics applications. Sociolinguistics is the study of language in relation to society. Sociolinguistics is concerned with investigating the relationship between language and society with the goal being a better understanding of the structure of language and how languages function in communication. In sociolinguistics, we study society in order to find out as much as we can about what kind of thing language is. Euphemism is endemic in society: we are constantly renaming things and repackaging them to make them sound 'better'. With euphemism, we make meanings of rude or unpleasant words more polite (Wardhaugh cited in Azkiyah 2008: 1-3).

The universal existence of euphemism in language does not mean that euphemisms are identical in different languages. Euphemism has close relevance to culture. Notions and norms upheld by people in different cultures are not necessarily the same. As a result, taboos in different cultures are not necessarily the same.

The existences of euphemism are used to hide unpleasant ideas, even when the terms for themselves are not necessarily offensive. For example: *collateral damage* for *civilian casualties*, *gay* for *homosexual*. The existence of taboo words or taboo ideas stimulates the creation of euphemism (Fromkin in Azkiyah 2008:11). Euphemism also happens in Indonesian language that we find in society every day. We can find euphemistic words or phrase such as: *Pembantu rumah tangga* to substitute *babu*, *kolusi* to substitute *kongkalikong*, *lembaga permasyarakatan* to substitute *penjara*, and et cetera (Ohoiwutun in Azkiyah 2008:12).

Euphemism is also a part of habit in using the language appropriately and therefore consider on very important part of culture itself. As said before that euphemism is the expressions that are used to replace rude, offensive or to talk about taboo words. The concept of taboo in one society is different from that in other society so the concept of euphemism is different among societies.

Every culture has its own euphemisms because language is definitely influenced by the culture. It is interesting if we can discuss more about any euphemism in one of the society. The discussion about euphemism is interesting because the use of taboo makes euphemism endemic and prominent in our society. A society feels so offensive or embarrassed if they fail to cover the taboo or unpleasant words with appropriate euphemism that belong to that society. Our country, Indonesia, consists of many islands. Every island in

this country has particular culture including the local language. One society has its own local language which is different from that other society. In this research, the writer wants to know more about euphemisms that is used by the Sikka Krowe ethnic.

Sikka Krowe ethnic is one of five ethnics in Sikka Regency. Sikka Krowe ethnic is the society who lives in the southern part of Sikka Natar beach to the eastern part of Tana Ai village. Sikka Krowe comes from two words, Sikka and Krowe. Sikka is the word from Sikka Language, *Sikang* which means to chase away. Sikka is also a name of traditional village in south beach of Sikka Regency known as Sikka Natar, whereas Krowe means people who live in remote areas which stretch up from Nelle up to the east Tana Ai village (Dinas Pariwisata Pemkab Sikka, 2008: 167).

People in Sikka Krowe ethnic have their own attitude, facts, beliefs, ideas, values, habits, customs, taboos and knowledge. They also have notions and norms that they uphold. Based on these, the society has different euphemisms from which are different other societies. So, the uses of Sikka Language euphemisms are also a symbol of Sikka people social identity.

According to people in Sikka Krowe ethnic it is taboo if we ask some salt (*hini*) at night. Therefore people there always substitute the word "*hini*" (salt) with "*awu*". *Awu* means the dust of woods as the product of combustion. So, when they want to get some salt from the other person, they will say "*lakang beli a'u awu oti*" (please give me the *dust*). "*Awu*" here refers to the salt. They believe that it is forbidden if someone in their society wants to ask some salt in the night and the person who wants the salt speaks the word "*hini*" directly like: "*lakang beli a'u hini oti*" (please give me the salt). In this case, salt is being a forbidden thing if somebody asks for it directly when the night. Because of that forbidden thing, people prefer to use the word *dust* to replace the word *salt* if they want to ask some salt in the night.

People in Sikka Krowe ethnic always use the euphemisms in their conversations to avoid unpleasant things or in the other words to talk politely. They should avoid the things that they think taboo, unpleasant or even rude to speak, so they can use language without hurting someone feeling. The writer wants to conduct the research on Sikka Krowe ethnic especially on ethnic who live in Habi village because the writer comes from this village and she wants to know more about euphemism that is used in this village. This is the reason why the writer becomes interested in studying the meaning of euphemism used by Sikka Krowe ethnic especially in Habi village.

2. Research Method

The researcher used descriptive method. Descriptive method is used to describe or to define the condition of the object or subject of the research (a person, the institution, society, and et cetera) depends on the facts that appear now (Nawawi cited in Sudjarwo and Basrowi 2009:87). Descriptive method is the method of the fact searching with the right interpretation (Whitney cited in Sudjarwo and Basrowi, 2009: 87). In this case, the researcher used the descriptive method to describe about the use of euphemism in Sikka Krowe ethnic. The researcher wanted to describe about the meanings used by the Sikka Krowe ethnic in Habi village. The researcher used this method because it is compatible with this research where the data are in form of words.

3. Result of Research

3.1 The Meaning of Euphemism

In this research, the researcher made a clear explanation about the limitation of meaning that the researcher wants to describe. The researcher described the meaning based on lexical meaning. Lexical meaning is also called semantic meaning or external meaning. It is the meaning or individual words of lexicon or derivation, as seen in dictionaries. Lexical meaning can be grouped into:

1. Conceptual meaning

It is also called denotation or reference or cognitive or descriptive meaning. It is a meaning as a concept, or as what is expressed by its referent. Conceptual meaning known as (a) generic meaning, a wide or general meaning that involves some specific or narrowed meanings. E.g: "Sekolah kami menang". Sekolah refers to not only the building but also teachers, students, and administrative staff, (b) specific meaning, a specific conceptual meaning. E.g: Ahli bahasa: a man that is expert only in linguistics (Semiuin 2011: 77-78).

2. Associative meaning

It also called transferred or figurative meaning. This kind of meaning refers to meaning that is beyond its conceptual meaning. The meaning is transferred to other meaning that is different from its conceptual meaning as seen in: "Ada banyak bunga desa di kampung saya. Bunga here is not flower but a girl (Semiuin 2011: 78).

Associative meaning is grouped into:

- a) Connotative meaning refers to meaning of words because association and it is different from its lexical meaning, eg: "Berilah dia ampelop agar urusannya selesai". Ampelop here means money.
- b) Affective meaning, the meaning because of listener's or reader's reaction to the use of language. Since it affects the listener's or reader's feeling this meaning is called proverbs (gaya bahasa) as in "Datanglah ke pondok kami". Pondok here is used as an affective meaning to show modesty (Semiuin 2011: 78).
- c) Stylistics meaning, dealing with the meanings of the words in literature. It appears when words are used as proverbs (gaya bahasa).
- d) Collocative meaning, meaning of words of the same environment, as in: ikan, gurami. Gula, sayur, tomat, bawang, minyak, telur. etc. appearing in kitchens (Semiuin 2011: 78).
- e) Idiomatic meaning. Meanings of idioms that are beyond the meanings of lexical words or grammatical elements, as in "ketakutan, kesedihan" contain grammatical meaning, but "kemaluan" contains idiomatic meaning. Other examples: "membanting tulang" (working hard), meja hijau (court), "panjang tangan" (thief) (Semiuin 2011: 79).

The researcher grouped the meaning of words and phrases of euphemism based on the types of meaning:

a.) Conceptual Meaning

The conceptual meaning is contained on the word *me la'i* (son) and the phrase *ala watu* (naughty). Both the word *me la'i* and the phrase *ala watu* were the general word which has the some specific meaning. *Me la'i* means son, but in this context the word *me la'i* is used to address a little son. Both the phrase *ala watu* and the word *me la'i* included in generic meaning.

b.) Associative Meaning

The associative meaning is contained on the fourteen data of this research.

- 1.) Connotative meaning is contained on the words *awu, mage, luda*. This type of associative meaning is also contained on the phrases *oto bis, tutur wora wotar*.
- 2.) Affective meaning is contained on the word *migur* and the phrases: *niti notong, ala watu, tu te, me la'i, and waen to'en*.
- 3.) Idiomatic meaning is contained on the phrases: *uben alan, liman blon, gatar lema, kang waten, man blon, sakang galung, weter wenet, potat meseng, janan jepat*.

The researcher presented all of the data in form of table that shown in form of words and phrases.

No.	Data Words/Phrase	Meaning
1.	Tutur wora wotar	Speak too much (<i>Fussy</i>)
2.	Oto bis	Bus (<i>Snake</i>)
3.	Migur	Hard (<i>Lazy person</i>)
4.	Uben alan	Bottom and head (<i>Hasty</i>)
5.	Awu	Dust (<i>Salt</i>)
6.	Mage	Tamarind (<i>Stingy</i>)
7.	Niti notong	Skillful (<i>Coquettish</i>)
8.	Tu te	Slow (<i>Stupid</i>)
9.	Liman Blon	Long hand (<i>Thief</i>)
10.	Ala watu	Wanton (<i>Naughty</i>)
11.	Gatar lema	Itch (<i>Desire</i>)
12.	Kang waten	Eagle liver (<i>Bad</i>)
13.	Man blon	Long tongue (<i>Liar</i>)
14.	Me la'i	Son (<i>Little son</i>)
15.	Sakang galung	Riding animal (<i>Fight</i>)
16.	Weter wenet	Talking (<i>Insult</i>)
17.	Potat meseng	Sunset (<i>Die</i>)
18.	Janan jepat	Catch (<i>Greedy</i>)
19.	Waen to'en	Face and back (<i>Betrayer</i>)
20.	Luda	Caterpillar (<i>Deaf</i>)

3.2. The Reason Why People of Sikka Krowe Ethnic Used Euphemism

People of Sikka Krowe ethnic use Sikka Language to communicate. Sikka language is the regional language that used by people who live in Sikka regency. Sikka language also has euphemism which is different from other's language. Long time ago people there always use the euphemism when they talk with the person who has a high social status. They use the euphemism to show their respect for the person who has a higher social status.

Table 2. The Reason of Using Euphemism

No	The Reasons	Words/ Phrases
1.	Talking Polite	<i>Tutur wora wotar, migur, uben alan, mage, niti notong, tu te, liman blon, ala watu, gatar lema, kang waten, man blon, me la'i, sakang galung, weter wenet, potat meseng, janan jepat, waen to'en, luda.</i>
2.	Escape from the dangerous things	<i>Awu and oto bis.</i>

There were two reasons of the using of euphemism in Sikka Krowe ethnic. First is because the speaker wants to talk politely and the second is because the speaker wants to escape their self from the dangerous thing of speak the taboo or

forbidden things directly. The researcher described the reason why people in Sikka Krowe ethnic used euphemism by using the table.

4. Conclusion

The researcher had some important information about the use of euphemism in Sikka language in word or phrase spoken by people of Sikka Krowe ethnic who live in Habi village in Sikka regency. The researcher found twenty conversations that contain euphemism expressions which are commonly spoken by native speakers of Sikka language who are the Sikka Krowe ethnic and live in Habi village. The meanings of euphemisms that used in Sikka Krowe ethnic are generic conceptual meaning and associative meaning like: connotative meaning, affective meaning, and idiomatic meaning. The reasons why people of Sikka Krowe ethnic used euphemism are: first, because they want to talk politely and second, they want to escape their self from the dangerous things.

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