

The Use of The Expression Tabe' To Show Politeness in Toraja Language Short Talks

Britni Delfita Pata' Allo K and Dewi Nuryanti
Institut Bisnis Nusantara

bridelfita@gmail.com, dewiwahid@ibn.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This research was aimed to explain the purpose of using the expression tabe' in Toraja language. The data was taken from the short talks between two people, it was recorded data. The writer used the theory by Penelope Brown about politeness. The result of the analysis found five reasons for a speaker using tabe'; 1) to make a request for something; 2) to permit something; 3) to show regret; 4) to apologize for making a mistake; and 5) to stress the information about one thing.

Keywords: Tabe', Politeness, Short talks

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan tujuan penggunaan ungkapan tabe' dalam bahasa Toraja. Data diambil dari percakapan singkat antara dua orang penutur, data tersebut merupakan data dalam rekaman. Teori yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah Teori Kesopansantunan oleh Penelope Brown. Hasil analisis menemukan lima tujuan seorang penutur mengucapkan tabe', yaitu untuk meminta sesuatu; untuk meminta izin melakukan sesuatu; untuk menunjukkan penyesalan atas sesuatu; untuk meminta maaf karena melakukan suatu kesalahan; serta untuk penekanan atas suatu informasi.

Kata kunci: Tabe', kesopansantunan, Percakapan singkat

I. INTRODUCTION

Politeness is not only about the way people behave in public or with a well-known acquaintance. The way someone behaves, such as using body language, gestures, or even their facial expression will cause a different judgment from other people. It is the politeness in behaving. To be a polite person in society will cause one good quality of a person. Being polite will be judged as a good person, while being impolite becomes a bad one. Politeness in socializing has become the fundamental of society. Every family will be the first teacher of a child to learn how to be a polite person. So that, politeness is important in everyday behavior. On the other hand, politeness in using language is also found in our everyday life.

In speaking, many forms of politeness appear in someone's speech. We can think of politeness in general terms as having to do with ideas being tactful, modest, and nice to other people. Politeness in language is about how someone delivers the message without making the other person get feeling of underestimate.

Being polite is a complicated business in any language. It is difficult to learn because it involves understanding not just the language, but also the social and cultural values of the community. Being polite in speaking is not only about saying 'please' when we are happy to ask

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someone, or 'sorry' when we make mistakes. Every language has its own way to express politeness. One of the languages is Toraja Language.

Toraja Language is a language spoken by speakers of Toraja or other boundaries in the Tana Toraja region. The language used in Toraja will sometimes be heard differently from other languages in South Sulawesi, though some words are spoken in other places in South Sulawesi. Such as in Palopo, in Bugis, or some in Makassar. In fact, some words in Toraja language are also heard as Javanese language. For example, the word 'pira' is the same with the word 'piro' in Javanese. The word 'oto' is also heard as 'oto' in Minangkabau language. The meaning of the words is also the same.

There is one word in Toraja language that is used mostly as a polite word. The word is used not only for the elder but also for the same age. The word 'tabe' is a specific word that can identify its speaker's background easily. Here, the background of original region or place. Whenever we go and talk in Toraja, Palopo, or other closest places, we will hear the used of the word 'tabe'. Because of this, I would like to take the word 'tabe' as my focus on analysis.

In analyzing the data, I have many questions to be answered. I think that analyzing one language is an interesting thing because the phenomena are our everyday data. People use language in their life. So, I want to know the purpose of using the word 'tabe'.

Reviewing literature is very needed in doing analysis. It is the scientific writing that must use experts' theories. Here, I will review some literature that I think will be used in my discussion. Using a different language will give the information about its speakers. When we hear someone talking to others, we try to know everything about him/her. We know the gender, maybe the age, or the speakers' other background.

Politeness

Being polite is not only about how to behave or showing good manners to other people. Different cultures will have different views about being polite. It is also used in language. Being polite is a complicated business in any language (Holmes, 2013:284). Because of its differences in usage, it is known as a complicated thing.

One thing may be okay in one culture but can be forbidden for others. For example, using your left hand in Jakarta to call or stop public transportation is no problem but it is not allowed in other places. People will say that the person is impolite. How to be polite in language relates to politeness.

According to Sifianou (2000:81), Polite is derived from the Latin *politus*, past participle of "polire" meaning "to smooth". Thus, "polite" originally meant "smoothed", "polished", and subsequently "refined", "cultivated", "well bred", and so on, when referring to people, and

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“courteous”, ”urban”, etc. when referring to manners. Here, a polite person is the one who acts as the way what polite intends to. We cannot do contradict as being polite.

Furthermore, Based on Leech (1982:104) defines politeness as those forms of behavior which are aimed at the establishment and maintenance of comity, i.e, the ability of participants to engage in interaction in a comfortable and harmonious atmosphere. We do not want our language to threaten another hearer. So, that is why we have to know language politeness to keep the communication running well.

According to Mills (2003:6) in Nabila Elhadj Said (2010:26), Politeness is the expression of the speaker's intention to mitigate face threats carried by certain face threatening acts toward another. The speaker tries to avoid the listener to be ashamed or be threaten by the use of language.

Yule (2010:135) said that in the study of linguistic politeness, the most relevant concept is “face”. Your face is your self-image. This is the emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize. It means that not only the speaker but also the listener will lose the self-image when they are being impolite in speaking.

Then, Yule also stated that politeness can be defined as showing awareness and consideration of another person’s face. Thinking of what we are going to say is the best way to show our awareness of this ‘face’ concept. He then divides the “face” concept into two: negative face-the need to be independent and free from imposition; and positive face-the need to be connected, to belong, to be a member of the group (2010:135).

We can conclude that in every culture, politeness is not only about the way to behave or show good manners, but it is also about using language properly. Language used in a speech that does not cause the listener to lose their intention in having conversation with us needs a polite way. It is not easy to know whether the language we use is polite or not when we do not know which way we have to use in speaking.

Strategy Politeness

Politeness in using language may different from one speaker to another. It may be because the speakers are from different cultures. It will affect his way of speaking. As Holmes said certain social factors-who you are talking to, the social context of the talk, the function and topic of the discussion-turn out to be important in accounting for language choice in many different kinds of speech community (2013:21).

As a language speaker, in order to be blended in the conversation, a speaker should know some strategies in being a polite speaker. After that, to have good cooperation in talking among speakers is also important to build the conversation. The general rule for conversation is the Cooperative Principle: “Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at

which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.” (Grice 1989: 26).

Besides that, other experts also stated that using politeness in speaking may have two effects, either to the speaker or to the hearer. As Brown (1987:116) grouped politeness into two different views. One is positive politeness: the use of strategies designed to redress the addressee's positive face wants; and negative politeness: the use of strategies designed to redress the addressee's negative face wants.

In positive politeness, the speaker indicates that in general they want to maintain some of the hearer's positive face wants, for example, treating the hearer as a member of the same group or by expressing liking for the hearer's personality. While in negative politeness, The speaker indicates respect for the hearer's face wants and the wish not to interfere with the hearer's freedom of action.

In conclusion, speakers have to remember some ways of avoiding the use of language that can cause misunderstanding among speakers. Everyone in a conversation may not want to lose their own image to make the conversation occur.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methods of analyzing are a must in doing analysis. To help me to do the analysis of the data, the qualitative research method I use here. Qualitative research is research, which has the result of an analysis procedure without using statistical analytical procedure (Moleong, 2007:6). I use qualitative research because I do not have any numerical analysis, or I do not use any number.

The data I have are taken from the short talk in my home in Tana Toraja during the PSBB. Because they are short talk, it is impossible for me to write while the talking happens. So, I have to record the talk. During this pandemic, I cannot go everywhere even to buy any recording tools. I finally decided to use my cellular as a recording tool. I recorded the talk and decided to have 5 talks. Unfortunately, there was noise when I recorded the talk. It was because there were many people at home and made the recorded data unclear.

After recording the data, I wrote the recording talk and tried to find out if the talk consists of my data. Unfortunately, I only have two short talks that I think have the needed data. So that, those short talks then were transcribed into its transcription. The written data will be given in the discussion.

III. DISCUSSION

Data 1.

Tanta Epi : Upping, Tabe' nanna ri te tas ku le.
(Upping, tolong simpan ini tas ku ya)
“Upping, tabe’ keep my bag”

Upping : Iyo, tanta.
(Baik, tante)

The conversation was between two people: Upping and her Tanta Epi. In this conversation Tanta Epi would like to ask Upping to do something for her.

Tanta Epi uses the word *tabe'* at the beginning of her utterances. Here, the word *tabe'* seems to be used to show that someone makes excuses to other people. She uses *tabe'* when she asks Upping to do something for her, that is to keep her bag. She commands Upping to do things for her in a polite way. This makes Upping not think that Tanta Epi commands her, but to request her. In this dialog, the word *tabe'* is used by Tanta Epi after the name of another person. The word *tabe'* itself is placed at the front part of the command utterance. So here, *tabe'* is used for asking request as polite command.

Data 2.

Upping : *Tabe' tanta Epi, la lendu' na'.*
 (Permisi tante Epi, Saya mau lewat)
 “Excuse me, Aunt Epi. (I want to pass by)”

Tanta Epi : *iyo, lendu' moko*
 (Iya, silahkan)
 “Yes, please”

The talk was between Tanta Epi and Upping. They talk about something. In the middle of the talk, Upping seems to have to go somewhere. In the data 2 above, Upping uses *tabe'* to her aunt. She uses *tabe'* when she has to go to other places and she has to pass her aunt. In order to get her way, she says *tabe'*. So, her aunt gives her way. From this talk, it can be said that *upping* uses *tabe'* to ask for something. Upping asks for her aunt's permission to allow her to pass the aunt. I can say that, *tabe'* in data 2 above is used for requesting something from others. In this case it is to ask for a permit from others.

Data 3.

Upping : *Tabe' tanta Epi, makka na' tesse cerminmu.*
 (Maaf tanta Epi, Saya sudah memecahkan cermin tanta Epi)
 “I am sorry Aunt Epi. I broke the mirror, Aunt Epi”

Tanta Epi : *matumbari na? Yamo to, dipela'-pela' ke pake ki' apa, tae na mettu' tu apa bisa di pa'*
Tabe' i!
 (Kok bisa? Makanya, hati-hati kalau pake barang, Tabe' tidak bisa memperbaiki/membalikkan/dimaafkan)

Upping : *Iyo, tanta, Tabe'.*
 (Iya, tante, maaf)

The talk happens when Upping makes a mistake. She broke something and then told her aunt. There are three times *tabe'* are used in this talk. In this talk, Upping uses *tabe'* when she makes mistake. When she reports her aunt, she says *tabe'* at the beginning of her talk. The word *tabe'* used by Upping

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seems to function to show her regret because of doing a bad thing accidentally. She wants to apologize for making a mistake. At Upping last use of *tabe'*, the word *tabe'* is used to say sorry again. While on Her aunt's statement, the word *tabe'* is used to stress the information by Aunt Epi about something.

After doing analysis, I think the purpose of a speaker using the word *tabe'* based on the talks above are 1) to ask for doing something; 2) to permit of something; 3) to show a regret; 4) to apologize of making mistake; and 5) to stress the information about one thing.

IV. CONCLUSSION

I think the use of the word *tabe'* in my mother tongue can have different reason for each speaker. Based on the question, I found five reasons of a speaker using *tabe'*. They are 1) to ask for something; 2) to permit something; 3) to show regret; 4) to apologize for making a mistake; and 5) to stress the information about one thing. I do not think my analysis is perfect. I am sure this research has many mistakes and needs some information from others who will read this analysis.

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