

The Agency in Apology in Toraja Language

Demitriana Ponto Lolok

Universitas Kristen Indonesia Toraja
Jl. Nusantara No. 12 Makale
Kabupaten Tana Toraja, Sulawesi Selatan
demitri.ponto@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In the previous researches of apology show that the agent who responsible in doing the act of apology is the speaker. This research aims to find out the agent who is responsible in succeeding the act of apology in Toraja Language. This research was conducted in various sub-districts in North Toraja. Since this is an ethnic study where the researcher has to dig into one's culture, it is classified as an ethnography study. By doing participant observation, indepth interview with the experts and recording in about a year, the data are collected. The data are analyzed by using ethnographic analysis that is domain analysis, taxonomic analysis and componential analysis. By not only looking at their denotational text that is linguistic analysis but also their interactional text, the actual social relations in each interactions can be found. The result of this study shows that Torajans apologize by using the word 'tabe' (pardon), using various disclaimer such as 'tomatua' (old person) and 'to pangkambi'/to manglaa' (young shepherd), asking the addressee to fix speaker's mistake(s) in 'ia ke den salana na kamu mora umpakaloloi' and forbidding the addressee to keep the mistake in their heart 'da'ta banni ma'diong ba'teng/da'ta banni inaata malua'. In those apologies, the speaker/addresser only says the apology but in terms of responsibility, it is not his or hers but the addressee's responsibility. Therefore, it can be concluded that the agent who is responsible in succeeding the act of apology is not the speaker but the addressee.

Kata Kunci: agent, apology, social relation, responsibility

I. Introduction

The development of theories that deal with society such as pragmatics, sociolinguistics and antropolinguistics has significant changes when the theories which are mostly found and formed by Western theorists have been proved not always applicable to Eastern data. It is because the concept of what people believe and apply vary from culture to culture. Different cultures require different rules in which people show their unique way in thinking and perceiving something. As Spradley says "before you impose your theories on the people you study, find out how those people defined the world" (Spradley, 1980). This argument happens to be applicable with the notion of apology.

Cross-cultural studies agree that the act of

apology is performed when offence and violation of certain culture happened (Spencer-Oatey, 2000). However, what can be called an offence and violation is relative and is determined by certain rules or norms applied in its cultures. Tanaka et al. (2000) tries to argue against the belief which say that both Japanese and Western cultures (Canadian and British) have stereotypical conception on apologizing behaviour. They administer 8 scenarios in 392 questionnaires to the three cultures (131 Japanese, 165 British and 96 Canadian). Four scenarios are formed to see responsibility for the offence which lay mainly with the person who making the complaint (CP) and the other four scenarios with a third party or with external circumstances (EC). All respondents rated themselves as 'not very

responsible' although mean rating of EC more slightly higher than for CP scenarios. They have similar perception of the CP and EC in terms of annoyance and personal responsibility. By using Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFID), responsibility and manage problem examples as the categories, it is found that Japanese do not apologize significantly more frequently than the both compared cultures. It is also found that Japanese are reluctant to apologize when other person is at fault. The researchers conclude that their research do not sufficiently satisfy the need to see the difference among cultures and still needed the further researches to be conducted.

Many other researches have also conducted research on apology. Murad tries to focus on the pragmatics of the apology strategy within Israeli-Arab college students (Murad, 2012). There are ten strategies found. When they make mistakes and feel the need to apologize, they apologize. The apologies are followed by acknowledgement of responsibility. Fahmi (2008) focused on the pragmatic of the apology strategies applied by 50 native speakers of American English and 50 from Jordanian Arabic in Jordanian University. It is found that the tendency in using various kinds of explicit, less explicit and non-apology strategies was different. Yao (2011), on the other hand, discusses about frequency differences as a contributor or receiver of an apology in Chinese daily talk. The result shows a slight differences when females as contributors, 36 to 34 and as receiver females have higher frequency than males, 50 to 20. Another research on apology is conducted by Dharni (2012). Examining the contributing factors in offering and accepting apology in restorative justice in London, he finds that apology will be delivered if it is involving harassment. Age of offende, offender gender and formal sanction also move the offender/perpetrator to offer the apology. The research shows that apology helps the effectiveness of the restorative justice.

Some aspects of apology in relation with politeness and gender have already been known but no such research which connected the idea of agency with the act of apology except the speech act theory itself (Yoshitake, 2004). No one has done some research on the relation between agency and apology. For these reasons, my research

topic is apology and agency in Toraja Language. Toraja Language is chosen as the object of this study by considering a preliminary data taken from a ritual in Toraja, Indonesia, shows that the doer of the act of apology is not the speaker but the hearer. To do the apology is a must to be fulfilled by the hearer, for it will be considered 'taboo' if the hearers do not do that.

One of example of apology in Toraja Language which has been translated *denmani kadangku tibaen bingga'* tibaen pamisakan tokumua bisara ponno anna tangtisebok na petangnga anna tipale kedako kesuleki ullo'kon lalanta lata pabai angin mangngiri' tama pangala' kamban tama rebongan anna rokko ia la'tana padang diong maririnna litak anna tang kendek anna tang pandiulu-ulu nalangngan ia toda' membua pallan menlitak sendana na popedampi ia to buda ta potamba' ia to buda....' (R.01) "If in my words there are mistakes and it hurts your feeling in a simple word or rude words which mock you, when you go home do not bring those mistaken words, throw it to be brought by the wind into the forest. In the forest it will be taken down into the earth, into the yellow color of the earth and it will not go up but stay there, will be fruitful as latex of yellow sandalwood and become medicine of people, medicine to all of us....".

Not only because the former research not satisfy the need to know the differences among cultures but it cannot explain the exact reason for their reluctance to apologize. Those researches also only explain one social situation and do not cover the other contexts which might perform different strategies. The strategy people use in school and university perhaps is different from what people use in the market, home or in ritual. The capability of the actors in performing apology should be interesting to be elaborated. In Duranti (1997), it is also stated that 'context plays a role in the construction of the person'. For these reasons, conducting a research on agency in the act of apology in various contexts is worthy to be done. It is hoped that the outcome of this research answers who is responsible for the act of apology.

II. Research Method

A. Research Design

The method used in this research was ethnographic research (to find cultural pattern in its natural setting: Gay, 2006). The data were collected through (1) participant observation (2) indepth-interview (3) recording, and (4)field notes.

B. Research Time

The research took approximately fifteen months from May 2012-August 2013 in North Toraja.

C. Participant

The data in this study are apology in Toraja Language. The researcher limited the data only when it is suitable with the category (happened in certain social situations, the agent of the apology is the addressee and when there was interaction happened). Most recording which are in Bahasa Indonesia or influenced by Bahasa Indonesia are excluded. Beside gathering data from daily conversation and speech about apology, the researcher also interviewed the experts in each chosen social situation. The result of interview is used to complete the data, to answer all the assumption which raised from data, and to gain the whole idea of concept of person in Toraja Language.

D. Data Collection

Related theories, previous studies and methodology were gathered by searching on theses, journals, books, faculty library and university library and from internet sources. Through the field research, the writer used ethnography techniques by directly observing, interviewing and recording some rituals and daily life in Toraja also by taking fieldnotes to obtain data needed.

The writer observed the norms and apology's structure of Torajan's has in ritual and daily life (school, market and office) by using participant observation in order to get data accurately.

In order to get deeper understanding about apology and agency, the writer interviewed several Torajan experts who really know about

this practice. Experts are the related people in each contexts. With these different experts, it is hoped that the perspective of apology in Toraja will be gained better. Those questions were formulated after doing research proposal's by consulting with the supervisors.

The data was recorded by certain equipment: Audio-recorder: Samsung corby GT-B3210. It can be used to record conversation in about 7 meters away. Its quality is reliable in doing participant observation without attracted people's attention too much. The writer also took notes of data that could not be captured by recording equipment such as social and interactional processes.

E. Data Analysis

Data are analyzed by using steps in analysing ethnographic data. The steps are domain analysis, taxonomy analysis and componential analysis (Spradley, 1980). Each single semantic relation in one social situation are classified by finding its similarities (taxonomy) and are contrasted to find its missing value (component). After doing componential analysis, there will be questions found that lead to do additional selective observation to complete the data. The reason why interviewing to experts is conducted while and after gathering more data.

III. Finding and Discussion

In the followings, I present data taken from different social situations. Particularly in this research, the social situations are daily situations and ritual situations. Daily situations are taken from market, school, and conflict resolution, where as ritual situations in descending ritual situation. I perform the analysis on 2 levels, in what is being said and what is relationship being carried out by what is being said. The total number of data is ten, five for each contexts, non-ritual and ritual context. For ordinary conversation contexts or non-ritual context, it is found people apologize in a market (3 data), a teacher teaches students to apologize in a classroom at school (1), and participant apologizes in a resolution conflict in a sub-district office (1). For ritual context, family and master of ceremony apologize

in a smoke-descending ritual (5).

After transcribing the recording, each data is translated into English by using morphosyntax analysis. That is done by dividing every word based on its morfem, bound or free morfem. Next, data is analyzed by looking at its denotational text and its interactional text. Denotational text reveals its linguistic content where the agent of each apology is the addressee where as the interactional analysis helps to find out what kinds of social relation are actually happened. For example, in a market where two friends met (man and woman), they talked about a pair of sandals quality. The man criticized his friend's sandals by saying *tabe' sandala'mu maanu maro'*, 'pardon, your sandals are too rough' but his friend disagreed and replied by saying *mammi' mukua*, 'it's good, you know'. The linguistic analysis of *tabe'* shows that it is a kind of pardon that is directed to the addressee to honor them, that is why it is implied that when someone says *tabe'* in Toraja Language, he/she already indicates that he/she is not responsible for anything that happen but the addressee. Furthermore, from its interaction, it can be seen that there is disharmony relation happened between them when the man criticized her but the roughness of his criticism is diminished by the word *tabe'*.

Several kinds of disclaimer in saying the apology are uttered by the speaker to avoid responsibility upon the fault they have committed. They are *tomatua* 'old person', *to pangkambi'*/*to manglaa* 'young shepherd', and *tali-tali bannu ke ma'palo-palo songko' peladaran* 'the young'. This disclaimer is directed to the addressee to force them to understand any mistakes that happened is due to their characteristic as old person (absentminded), young shepherd (uneducated) and the young (immature and still in learning process). Therefore, when responsibility points toward agency, the agent of the apology is the addressee.

At school, the teacher teaches her student to punish themselves if they make mistakes by saying *pia ia bamba kalena ke torokossik*. The teacher is the one who says the words but they are executed by the children. The children is responsible for the mistakes they have done. The addressee of the utterance executed the addresser

said.

In a conflict resolution, a man after delivering his argument, he said *ia ke den salana na kamu mora umpakaloloi* 'if there is mistake, you will make it right'. Here, it is obvious that the speaker stated that it is the hearers' responsibility to fix the mistakes. He only utters the apology which will be executed by his hearers. Therefore, the agent of the act of apology is the addressee.

It is similar with a master of ceremony when he delivers his apology, *'kikua den mani sanga madatunta sala sa'bu dio randan lilaku, kukua da'ta banni ma'diong ba'teng, da'ta banni inaata malua, sangadinna ta pamamma' ia rokko malitkina tana, la dipamatindo ia rokko maririnna litak. Belanna, miissan sia, mitandai sia kumua digente' pa' aku pia to pangkambi', disa'bu' pa' aku anak to manglaa. Senga'pa iato panglaaku angku langgan pasumbungan puduk, angku kende pa'umpuran pau-pau'*, 'We say just in case your majesty name mispronounced, I say do not let it hurt your heart, do not keep it in your heart, but you calm it down into the (mother) land, will be lie down the yellow part of the land because you also know, you also recognize that: I am still called a young shepherd, I am still named a young shepherd. My herds are still different and become the speaker of the family.'

Many other requests are made by a master of ceremony when he delivers his apology. For example, forbidding the addressee to keep the mistake in their heart (*da'ta banni ma'diong ba'teng/da'ta banni inata malua*), asking the guests to be patient (*sabbara'komi sola nasang*) and just accepting whatever it is (*kukua na kamumora pasiinan inanta to*). Those all indicates that the doer of each apology is the addressee.

This research shows that the addressee is responsible for each apologies. Beside directing the addressee to do various request in the apology, the speakers also try to diminish their responsibility by using various disclaimers. Therefore, the addressee takes a full responsibility towards the apology made by the speakers.

This research finds that the agent of apology is the addressee. It is indicated by using denotational text analysis (Sandarupa, 2013). Even though one who utters the apology is the speaker but he/she is not responsible in succeeding

the act of apology, it is the addressee responsibility. From its interactional text analysis, it is found that each apology is beneficial in restoring social relationship that have been disturbed (Fischbacher et al, 2011)

The findings are unapplicable with what in the western and other languages shown by Austin that apology must be perform by person who does the mistake. For example in English there are several form of apologies. In an article written about apologies and apologetic attitude in early modern English, said that apologies are a set of relatively fixed expressions, consisting of verbs (apologize, excuse, pardon), adjectives (sorry, afraid) and noun (pardon)

In Austin (1962) defined that there are several conditions which should be fulfilled in order an act can be called happy. The conditions are,

“(A1) There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, the procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances. For example in a game I say ‘I pick George’ and then Gorge says ‘I’m not playing’ will not be accepted. (A2) The particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure involved; (B1) The procedure must be executed by all participants correctly; B2. The procedure must be executed by all participant completely”

According to Austin in the act of apology, the person who apologizes is the right person to invoke the apology. Based on these, he proposed the felicity condition as follows, (1) I did something wrong that I need to apologize, (2) condition A1 and A2 above should be obtained, (3) other conditions also should be obtained, and (4) After that, I will do something as my responsibility (Austin, 1962). In this case, Austin theories that the person who made a mistake, did something wrong, the person who is responsible for that. It is the apologizer who responsible to make amends upon the fault.

These data are different from Austin’s theory and it can not be applied in this language. Even though, apology in ritual speech is longer than in non-ritual contexts but actually, as one of my data sources said, the meanings of those words

are paralell which is the character of ritual speeches (Sandarupa, 2012). As has been analyzed in Toraja Language data, person who is responsible in succeeding the act of apology is the addressee. Therefore, it can be elucidated that the agent of apology is not the speaker but the addressee.

IV. Conclusion

In this research, it is found that the way Torajans apologize is divided into two contexts: non-ritual and ritual contexts. Although the apology in ritual contexts is longer because of its paralelism and repetition, both contexts are saying *tabe’*, asking the addressee to be patient (*sa’bara’ komi*), using disclaimer (*to matua, to pangkambi’/to manglaa/ tali-tali bannu ke ma’palo-palo songko’ peladaran*), asking the addressee to repeat the talk (*be animator*) (*pia ia bamba kalena ke torokossik, silele komi mekaio*), asking the addressee to fix the speaker mistake (*ia ke den salana na kamu mora umpakaloloi*), forbidding the addressee to keep the mistake in their heart (*da’ta banni ma’diong ba’teng/da’ta banni inata malua*). Therefore, the agent who is responsible in succeeding the act of apology in Toraja Language is the addressee.

It is suggested that it is necessary to give additional time to do ethnographic analysis to enrich the data particularly on other adat area and get more comprehensive analysis.

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