

Verbal Categories of Tae' Language and Cognitive Models of Luwu People

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ABSTRACT

Different language categories result in different ways of thinking. This research aims at analyzing the verbal categories of Tae' language and the pertinent cognitive models of Luwu People. It is an attempt to have a philosophical understanding of Tae' language as one of the local languages in South Sulawesi. This research used the descriptive-qualitative method. The data of the research were obtained from native speakers of Tae' language in Larompong District, Luwu Regency. The data were gathered through interviews with recording and note-taking techniques. The data were then transcribed and translated into English. The data were analyzed using the categories of Hopi language by Whorf and the theories of cognitive psychology by Sternberg, namely the theories of perception and memory. Tae' language has several verbal categories of assertion, mode, status, and modality. The categories reveal the complexity of constructive perception of Luwu people and their high use of memory.

Keywords: *verbal categories, Tae' language, cognitive models, Luwu people*

1. INTRODUCTION

The relation between language and thought has long been an intrigued issue. Some experts argue that the way people think in a culture determines the way they communicate with others. Conversely, some other experts believe that the language used by certain people in communication is the one that determines the way they view the world. It is supported by Linguistic Relativity from the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis which states that a language structure used by people influences the way they think and behave Wedasuwari [1].

Related to Linguistic Relativity, one of the ideas of language philosophy is that how language structure influences the way of thinking. According to Asoulin [2], an alternative construal of language that sees it as an instrument of thought is most notably manifested in the philosophy of language and linguistics. How language influences thought is clarified by Sternberg [3] that our thoughts and our language interact in myriad ways; language facilitates thought and it even affects perception and memory. "Perception is the set of processes by which we recognize, organize, and make sense of stimuli in our environment" [3]. "Memory is how we draw on our knowledge of the past to use this knowledge in the present" [3].

Considering the philosophical idea of Linguistic Relativity, while ruling out Universal Grammar, language structure and category cannot prevail universally indeed. There should be unique cognitive models rather than cognitive commonalities among different language users. Each language categorizes the world differently. Different language categories result in different ways of thinking. Then, linguistic categories reflect the cognitive models of the speakers. Yoshimura in Sutedi [4] asserted that the cognitive system in linguistics is all the activities of human thought in understanding and elucidating every experience subjectively.

There have been few pieces of research that studied the way people think from their language expressions. Dardjowidjojo [5] explored several phenomena which indicate the way the Indonesian speakers think. Sudaryat [12] described the mindset of Sundanese people in their language expressions examined from psycho-pragmatic aspects. Rahardian [6] described the Javanese speakers in the Semarang way of thinking by conceptualizing metaphorical expressions and their cognitive process. There have been also ample researches on Tae' language structure eg. Ibrahim, [7]; Hidayah, [8]; Pujiati & Rusdiansyah [9]. A study drawing a philosophical idea of Tae' language's

structure particularly the cognitive models of the speakers would be fruitful as well.

This paper presents some verbal categories of Tae' language to have an alternative structural understanding of the language. It is expected that this analysis can give pieces of philosophical ideas of Tae' language and new distinctive features of Luwu culture. The presentation in this paper simply follows the flow of Whorf's article "Some Verbal Categories of Hopi" Carroll, [10] and directly puts Tae' verbal categories based on Hopi's categories. Then, the cognitive models of Luwu people who speak Tae' language are discussed accordingly. Hopi is an Indian language considered exotic by Whorf because of its distinct categories.

Tae' itself is one of the local languages in Luwu area, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Based on the Ethnologue data, the number of *Tae'* speakers is 250.000 and increasing Lewis, [11]. It is used from Larompong district in Luwu Regency until Masamba in Luwu Utara with some other scattered pockets. To be noticed that the basic structure of Tae' is verb+subject, *Tandea-na* 'hungry+I' for 'I am hungry' or *Kumande-na* 'eat+I' for 'I am eating'. Still, there are some other structural variations like subject+verb+i (object successor particle), *Ku-kande-i* 'I+eat+that object.' This variation exists whenever the object is recognized, then the verb *kumande* changes into *kande*.

2. METHOD

This research used the descriptive-qualitative method. The data of the research were obtained from native speakers of Tae' language in Larompong District, Luwu Regency. The data were gathered through interviews with recording and note-taking techniques. The data were then transcribed and translated into English. The data were analyzed using the categories of Hopi language by Whorf and the theories of cognitive psychology by Sternberg, namely the theories of perception and memory. The data of Tae' verbal categories in use/in utterances were classified as either constructive perception or direct perception Sternberg [3]. The extent of the utterances' memory used was also determined.

3. ANALYSIS

Four generic verbal categories of Hopi are referred to in discussing the ones of Tae' in this part, namely assertion, mode, status, and modality.

3.1. Assertion

Hopi verbs have three assertions: Reportive (zero forms), Expective (suffix *-ni*), Nomic (suffix *-ŋ^wi*). Tae' seems to have such assertions but simpler ones. Assertions in Hopi do not refer to time or duration. They distinguish three kinds of information. Tae' assertions also do not merely refer to time or duration. They

sometimes refer to the subject of the verb at the same time. Several particles in Tae' designate more than one function.

3.1.1. Reportive

The reportive in Tae' refers to a present continuous or perfect continuous event. There is no assertion in Tae' to report a past event. Adverb of time is directly added to a sentence to have a past sense, e.g. *sammai* 'yesterday'. Tae' may report the event in the first and third person. The event of the second person belongs to the imperative sentence. For the third person subject, the speaker of reportive can either see the event directly or only know that the event happened/happening. The listener's perspective has no deal with that reportive.

<i>Mallai-mo</i>	<u>I have been running</u>
<i>Mallai-na</i>	<u>I am running</u>
<i>Mallai-mi</i>	<u>He has been running</u>
<i>Mallai-i</i>	<u>He is running</u>
<i>Mallai-mikang</i>	<u>We have been running</u>
<i>Mallai-kang</i>	<u>We are running</u>

3.1.2. Expective

The expective declares an expectation or anticipation of a situation. It is translated by English future, 'is going to', or 'begins to.' The assertion of expective in Tae' has nothing to do with time as such, an expectant attitude may be projected into an account of past events. The expective in Tae' is made by simply putting the prefix *la-* to the verb. The meaning may be 'will' or 'will begin to.'

<i>La-mallaimo</i>	<u>I will begin to run</u>
<i>La-mallaina</i>	<u>I will run</u>
<i>La-mallaimi</i>	<u>He will begin to run</u>
<i>La-mallaii</i>	<u>He will run</u>

3.1.3. Nomic

The nomic does not declare any particular situation, but offers the statement as a general truth, e.g. English 'she writes poetry, rain comes from the clouds.' In Tae', the nomic structure is the same as the reportive structure of a present continuous event. Their different meaning can be noticed by the context of the conversation.

<i>mappa'guru</i>	teach
<i>Apa tajama (te')? Mappaguruna</i>	What are you doing now? <u>I am teaching</u>
<i>Apa tajama(jama) lako te'? Mappaguruna</i>	What is your job now? <u>I am a teacher</u>

According to the theory of perception by Sternberg, the reportive assertion in Tae' language reveals that Luwu people may have both constructive perception and direct perception. They can construct the stimulus perceived using prior knowledge, contextual information, and sensory information. They can also perceive the sensory input to have and share all the

information needed. This cognitive model is somewhat similar to the mindset of Javanese speakers in Semarang in that they use their perception and prior experiences Rahardian, [6]. The reportive and expective assertions in Tae' language always make use of memory to draw on experiences in various moments to use that information in the present. It can be implied that through their assertion structure, Luwu people may have flexible use of perception and high use of memory.

3.2. Mode

Mode is the generic category of the system by which is denoted the nature of the mingled discreteness and connection between a sentence (clause) and the sentence (clause) which follows or precedes it. Independent mode implies that the sentence is detached from others, though it is possible to relate such sentence by paratactic connectives like English 'and'. But the Hopi shows a great liking to hypotactic constructions. These employ six mutually exclusive dependent modes denoted by suffixes placed after the assertion of suffix.

Tae' also has such a mode category but a simpler one. Tae' modes seem to be independent ones because the particles are not directly placed in the verb. The meaning of Tae' sentences implied by the use of Tae' modes is also simpler. It implies the meaning of the sentences (clauses) purely and added by the meaning of the mode employed.

3.2.1. Conditional

The conditional mode in Tae' is stated by the use of 'ke', 'ake', or 'yake' (lexical variation) which means 'when, if.' The place of 'ke' is the same as the English 'if' that is at the beginning of the if clause. The position if clause and main clause in Tae' conditional are also changeable. Both clauses of Tae' conditional usually designate nomic form. But, expective form can be used in one of the clauses or both of them.

((Y)a)ke sulei lako banua, natiroi to' salu

When he goes home, he sees the river

((Y)a)ke sulei lako banua, lanatiroi to' salu

When he goes home, he will/want to see the river

3.2.2. Correlative

Correlative mode in Tae', just like in English, is shown by the use of reason and result linking words, *nasaba* (probably from Indonesian *sebab*) or *appa* for 'because,' 'since,' and 'as'; there is no specific linking word for 'for' in Tae'. The correlative mode in Tae' can have reportive, expective, and nomic forms by the adjustment of the verb particle.

Appa' sulei lako banua, natiroi to' salu

Because/since/as he goes home, he sees the river

3.2.3. Concurive

Tae' concurive mode is signed by time linking words, *na* for 'while, and,' *tonna* for 'as, at the same time.' Tae' concurive mode can also have three forms.

Tonna sulei lako banua, natiroi to' salu

As he goes home, he sees the river

Menarii na sumengo He danced and sang

3.2.4. Sequential

Tae' sequential mode is signed by time linking phrases, *tonna purami* for 'after,' *na mane* for 'and then'. It is just like the extension of Tae' concurive mode.

Tonna lattumi jio banua, natiroi to' salu

After he gets home, he sees the river

Menarii na mane sumengo

He danced and then sang

3.2.5. Agentive

The agentive mode in Tae' recognizes only English 'who, which' not 'whom.' 'Who, which' use the same agentive word in Tae' with several lexical variations, *to'*, *to'o*, *yato'*, and *yato'o*.

Yato' muane sule lako banua, tiroi salu

The man who went home saw the river

Kutiro(i) - yato' muane sule lako banua

I saw - the man who went home

3.2.6. Transrelative

Transrelative mode is general relatedness bridging a difference of subject in two clauses. It has no English equivalent; no Tae' equivalent as well. In Hopi, the previous five modes refer to the condition in which the subject of both clauses is the same. While in Tae', those five modes can refer to the condition in which the subject in the first clause is different from the subject in the second clause. So, it can cover the absence of transrelative in Tae'.

Tonna sulei lako banua, deng muane latammui

When he goes home, a man will meet him

Appa' menarii to' pea muane, jaji sumengoi to' pea bene

Since the boy dance, therefore the girl sang

Despite its simplicity and independence in representation, the mode of Tae' language is complex because it meets various linguistic discreteness and connection. Knowledge representation is also a part of perception Sternberg, [3]. Thus, the perception of Luwu people through their language mode can be said as complex which requires greater memory use. The perception itself is mostly constructive. The logic on mode expression is constructed mainly based on sensory and auditory perceptions related to time and place.

3.3. Status

The status categories have been named affirmative, negative, interrogative, and definitive. In Tae', various basic structures of affirmative status form have been shared in the introduction and previous verbal categories. The rest statuses are discussed as follow:

3.3.1. Negative

Negative status in Tae' is made by the use of the negation word *tae'*. The basic pattern of Tae' negative statement is negationword+subjectparticle+verb+object.

<u>Tae' nakumande</u>	He <u>does not</u> eat
<u>Tae' kuissengngi</u>	I <u>do not</u> know (about) it
<u>Tae' namaballo</u>	It is <u>not</u> good
<u>Tae' nadeng sule</u>	He <u>never</u> went (home)

3.3.2. Interrogative

Yes-no-question in Tae' is formed by the addition of the word *raka* usually at the end of the sentence or simply the change of intonation of affirmative status. Tae' also has a wh-question with several question words that should be placed at the beginning of the sentence.

<u>La-mallaii?</u> (raising intonation)	<u>Will</u> he run? =
<u>La-mallaii raka?</u>	<u>Will</u> he run?
<u>Enda sangangta?</u>	<u>What</u> is your name?
<u>Umbananai banuammu?</u>	<u>Where</u> is your home?
<u>Pirang(pi) nasule?</u>	<u>When</u> will he come back?

3.3.2. Indefinitive

There is no specific particle or word as indefinite marker status in Tae'. Still, it is possible to have such indefinite status by using the affirmative and interrogative statuses at once.

<u>Mataku 'na - apa lakajajiang?</u>
I <u>wonder</u> - what is coming?

Similar to the mode, the status of Tae' language discloses the complexity of constructive perception and memory use of Luwu people which is represented in a rather simple representation. Different forms and details of the perception of Luwu people may result in diminutive variations of the status expressions of Tae' language. The variations of the status expression in the negative and interrogative form, fortunately, have a clear pattern as can be seen in the examples.

3.4. Modality

There are eight modalities in Hopi that referred to discuss the modalities in Tae', they are:

3.4.1 Quotative

There are words or phrases in Tae' that are similar to quotative markers in Hopi like *karebanna* 'according to

the story', *nakua* 'they/he/she say(s)', and *kade* 'it is said. The last one is commonly used to emphasize that the speaker does not see the story or report shared; the speaker just quotes from others.

Kusa'ding ronnoi kade'
I heard (that) he fell down

3.4.2. Inhibitive

Hopi inhibitive modalizer is translated simply by 'cannot'. In Tae', 'cannot' is translated as *tae'* (subject) *bela* and *tae'* (subject) *wadding*.

Tae' nabela sule He cannot go home
Tae' kuwadding sule I cannot go home

3.4.3. Potential

The potential modality in Tae' is simply the opposite of the inhibitive modality. The word *tae'* is omitted and the subject particle is placed after the verb as Tae' basic sentence structure.

Nabelai sule He can go home
Waddingna sule I can go home

3.4.4. Indeterminate

Indeterminate modality indicates uncertainty corresponding to 'perhaps, possibly, maybe' in English. In Tae', indeterminate modality relates to potential modality since the word *nabela* and *wadding* can also mean 'perhaps, possibly, maybe'. Another word that has such meaning is *kapang*. It can be used together with *nabela* and *wadding* to have indeterminate emphasis.

Yake sulei lako banua, nabela kapang natiroi to' salu
When he goes home, he maybe sees the river

3.4.5. Advisory

There is no advisory modality in Tae'. To advise in Tae', simple and direct sentences can be used. Tae' does not have such a classy advisory modality of Hopi.

3.4.6. Concessive

There is also no concessive modality in Tae'. It is quite rare to say something with concessive modality even in a simple and direct sentence. But if English 'it seems that' is said as an independent concessive marker, then Tae' can say it with *pada bang kimua*.

3.4.7. Necessitative

Necessitative in Tae' has no specific modalizer. 'Necessarily, naturally, inevitably' can be said by the word *parallu* (from Indonesian *perlu*) and emphasized by the word *inang* 'really (have to).'

Inang parallui sule He really has to go home

3.4.8. Impotential

It is difficult to find impotential expression in Tae'. Indeed, it is said that impotential modality is very difficult to express in our ways of thinking. But if English 'although' is said as an independent impotential marker, then Tae' can say it with *namoi*.

Some of the modality categories in Hopi do not exist in Tae' language. The existing categories of the modality still show constructive perception but it is not as complex as the previous three categories (i.e. assertion, mode, status). It can be implied from the independent words representing the modality in Tae'. This simple modality expression also relates to the regular use of memory which is, again, not as high as in the other verbal categories. The memory use occupied in the modality expression is rather accompanied by the subjectivity of the Luwu people. This minor fact confirms the statement of Yoshimura in Sutedi [4] that human elucidates an experience subjectively. It is also similar to one of the mindsets of Sundanese speakers namely subjectivity [12].

4. CONCLUSION

From the above analysis, we can see that several verbal categories in Hopi do not exist in Tae'. Then, some of them can only be said by independent expression of words or phrases and do not directly influence the verb in Tae'. However, we should not say that Hopi is superior to Tae'. Referring back to the idea that different language categories result in different ways of thinking, for sure, Tae' has its unique language categories that may not be found in Hopi. Some of them have been shared in the discussion of this paper.

The categories mostly reveal the complexity of constructive perception of Luwu people and their high use of memory. Surprisingly, many of the verbal categories in Tae' language are in simple and flexible form even if they represent complex thought. It may implicate that Luwu people can have complex constructive perceptions but they tend to have simple language representation. Predictably, the high use of memory in Tae' language does not mainly deal with the time details but with other multiple information that makes the expression represents complex thought. It is just like many Indonesian local languages that are indistinctive for time detail.

At last, it is suggested to have further study with more systematic quantitative assessment on a greater number of samples to have a finer pattern of the cognitive models from the language used. The comprehensive pattern of Tae' words categories along with the cognitive models of the speakers can be used as supporting material for culture and language learning in Luwu areas.

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