Pragmatic Implicature..

by Donal Matheos Ratu

Pragmatic Implicature of Manado Malay Speakers' Questions

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Abstract— In various occasions, Manado Malay speakers often use question implicature. They use questions in different ways according to the context for specific purposes. Frequently asked questions often have certain pragmatic implicature in accordance with the context of the conversation, so that the same questions can have different intentions or implicature if the context is different. Pragmatic implicature of the questions used by Manado Malay speakers is an interesting language phenomenon. This study aims to describe pragmatic implicature of questions used by Manado Malay speakers in interacting. Pragmatic theories are used to examine this problem, especially the theory of question implicature developed by Grice (1975). Pragmatically, questions not only contain literal meanings, but they also have non-literal meanings. The meanings of the questions as part of such utterances can be related to natural meaning and non-natural meaning. This research uses a descriptive method. The main data of this study are utterances in the form of questions in various occasions in the society of Manado Malay speakers. The informants in this study were native speakers of Manado Malay. The data were obtained from direct observation, recording, and interviews. The main instrument of this research is the researcher himself who is assisted with field notes guidelines, interview guidelines, and recordings. The three data analysis procedures collected are: (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, and (3) conclusion/verification. A triangulation process was carried out to check the validity of the data, which include source triangulation, techniques and methods, and theory triangulation. The results of the study show that speakers of Manado Malay used questions that have pragmatic implicature for ten purposes, namely: giving direct and indirect commands, invitations, prohibitions, requests, rejections, advice, approval, certainty, expressing doubt, and borrowing. The use of the question implicature in conversation has several functions, which are to make utterances morepolite, to give more emphasis on the illocution, and to conceal the real intention of the speakers.

Keywords— pragmatic implicature, questions, Manado Malay speakers

I. INTRODUCTION

Manado Malay is one of the regional languages in North Sulawesi that is actively used until today. It is one of the regional variations in North Sulawesi (Rombepayung, 2012: 1) [1]. Regional variations distinguish the language used in one place with the language used in another place in North Sulawesi region. Each variation is called regional dialect or geographical dialect. Manado Malay is used as the language of communication between members of the community who live in the city of Manado and its surroundings. The use of Manado Malay has influenced other regional languages in North Sulawesi, so that this language has penetrated into rural areas in almost all regions of North Sulawesi, namely Minahasa, Bolaang Mongondow, as well as Sanghie and Talaud, making it as the lingua franca of young people.

As the language of communication dominantly used by the people of Manado, Manado Malay is unique because of the characteristics of the speakers who are open and the way they speak spontaneously as they are which seems rude. What is understood by the outside community as a rough expression turns out to be considered an ordinary expression, even showing a close relationship between speakers. Sometimes, this language phenomenon cannot be explained by relying solely on linguistic approaches, but also sociolinguistics and pragmatics, for example. There are many more unique things that arise when the speakers of Manado Malay are involved in communication events.

Pragmatic approach is used to examine the interesting phenomenon in language used by the speakers of Manado Malay. Pragmatics focuses on the functional use of language and the external structure of language, which is how linguistic units are used in a real communication. The meaning of language units in their use is mostly not the same as the meaning of the language units in the formal structure.

Pragmatics and semantics in language complement each other. Pragmatics works on functional language, while semantics studies language based on its formal structure. This statement is supported by Levinson (1992:1) [2]. who argues that pragmatics is the study of the relationship between symbols with interpretations that are related to the context. Purwo (1990:16) [3] also explained that semantics is context-independent, while pragmatics is context-dependent. The difference in meaning of language units based on semantic and pragmatic studies can be seen in the following example.

You come so early?

The sentence above has more than one meaning which is not the same or even in the opposite. Semantically, the sentence is an interrogative sentence that expresses praise, meaning that the person really comes early in the morning. Meanwhile, pragmatically, this sentence does not express a question or praise, but satire, meaning that the person comes late. So, the difference is that the first meaning is an internal meaning (semantics), while the second is external meaning (pragmatics) because it is used to reprimand or satirize in that context.

One of the interesting language phenomena as a pragmatic study is conversational implicature. Conversational implicature is a prominent concept in the study of pragmatics. This theory, introduced by Grice (2008) [4], is a solution that explains the problem of language meaning that cannot be solved by semantic theory. The concept of implicature comes from the verb to imply meaning to fold something into something else. This comes from the Latin verb 'plicare to fold'. Therefore, something that is implied or folded must be described so that it can be understood. Conversational implicature is something that is implied in conversation.

One aspect of conversational implicature is the question that is used by speakers in verbal interaction, so that it raises the term question implicature. Pragmatically, questions not only contain literal meanings, but also non-literal meanings. The meanings of the questions as part of such utterances can be related to natural meaning and non-natural meaning (Grice, 2008) [4]. The natural meaning is the meaning of communication, and non-natural meaning is the meaning that corresponds to the purpose of the utterances.

Reviewing questions related to their pragmatic implicature refers to non-natural meanings than natural meanings. It relates to the purpose of the questions as part of giving utterances that not only have a single meaning. Concretely, Grice said that an utterance can imply propositions that are not part of the utterances. To sharpen the explanation, Grice uses the term implicature in explaining what might be interpreted, suggested, or intended by speakers. Consider the following examples in Manado Malay.

A : Kiapa ngana baru sampe?
   (Why did you just arrive?)
B : Ya, so klar dang tu acara?
   (Yes, is the event finished?)
   In the conversation above, the question uttered by B not only asks whether the event is finished (as a conventional meaning), but also states disappointment because the event is over, and he cannot attend the event (as an unconventional meaning).

Language communication is not only about literal meaning, but also contains meaning or purpose that requires interpretation by the users of the language itself. In interpreting utterances, speakers and addressees usually have conventional meanings that are agreed upon as a consensus. The conventional meaning is called conventional implicature by Grice.

Ibrahim (1996:52) [5] reveals that Grice has developed a theory of implicature that connects expression, meaning, with the implicature of utterances. In his theory, Grice explained the difference between what was uttered and what was implicit in the utterance. In accordance with Grice's implicature theory, asking questions in daily interactions can be analyzed based on their pragmatic implicature. There are four uses of question implicature as an effort to understand the use of language in the communication process. First, implicature allows meaningful functional explanations of language facts that are not accessible through linguistic theory. Second, implicature provides a clear and explicit explanation of the difference between what is said and what is meant by language users. Third, implicature can simplify the structure and content of semantic descriptions. Fourth,

the concept of implicature can explain some language facts correctly.

As a unique language phenomenon, questions used by Manado Malay speakers have various pragmatic implicature according to the objectives of the speakers. Therefore, it is interesting to conduct a study on pragmatic implicature of questions used by Manado Malay speakers various communication events. This research is intended to describe the pragmatic implicature of questions used by Manado Malay speakers in communication.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative method. The main data of this study are interrogative sentences in various communication events of Manado Malay speakers. The informants in this study were native speakers of Manado Malay. The data were obtained through direct observation, recording, and interviews. Direct observations were made to directly observe the interaction of Manado Malay speakers in certain public places and family interactions. The researcher also recorded the conversations of Manado Malay speakers. Interviews were conducted to explore the pragmatic implicature of questions used by Manado Malay speakers. The main instrument of this study was the researcher himself assisted with field notes guidelines, recording devices, and interview guidelines. The three data analysis procedures collected are: (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, and (3) conclusion/verification. A triangulation process was carried out to check the validity of the data including source triangulation, techniques and methods, and theory triangulation.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Speakers of Manado Malay use question implicature in various communication events, such as in family interactions and some public places. It is interesting to know how Manado Malay speakers use questions seen in terms of their pragmatic implicature. Based on the results of the study, the pragmatic implicature of questions asked by Manado Malay speakers are presented below.

3.1. Questions as commands

Command is one of the verbal acts that expects speakers to carry out what is desired by the addressee. In carrying out the commands, speakers can use commands directly and indirectly. The indirect commands include using question implicature. Consider the following two conversations.

(A conversation at around 6:00 a.m. between a mother and child. At that time, the child is watching TV.)

Mother : Kiapa bulum mandi dang?
        (Why haven't you showered?)
Child   : Tunggu sadiki le!
         (Wait, a few more minutes!)

(An afternoon conversation between two motorcycle taxi drivers)
A: Ado, kiapa ngana masih di sini?
   (Ado, why are you still here?)
B: Ya, dia blum ba telpon kwak!
   (Yes, he hasn't called!)
   In the first conversation, the mother's utterance was not interpreted as a question only, but rather directed to the

'command'. This can be understood from the child's response to the question and the context that requires the child to take a shower immediately and must go to school.

In the second conversation, A did not just ask why B was still at the motorcycle taxi station when he arrived. In fact, he should have gone to pick up a customer who would go home and perhaps already wait in the office. Supposedly, B understands it as an order to immediately pick up the customer, but B argues that the customer has not called.

From the two conversations above, the question as a command requires the existence of a supportive context as a precondition. The preconditions are (1) in the first conversation, the meaningful command is told by the mother because the day is not a holiday, which requires her child to go to school, and (2) in the second conversation, A knows that every afternoon, B must pick up the customer who works as a civil servant.

3.2. Question as an Invitation

An invitation is an act in which the speaker hopes that the addressee will join him/her to do an activity. Pay attention to two conversations below.
(The conversation which happens at 6 p m involves two neighboring teenagers. They have to join choir rehearsal in their church.)
E : Ngana ndak mo latihan koor?)
  (Don't you join choir rehearsal?)
J : Ndak, kita kwak da beking PR.
  (No I don't, I have homework.)

(One afternoon at motorcycle taxi base camp, two motorcycle taxi drivers involve in a conversation)
M : Bos mo iko pi pasar?
  (Boss, will you join me going to the market?)
D : Nyandak!
  (No!)

In the first conversation, E does not simply ask a question. E intends to invite J to join choir rehearsal because they have tight schedule for choir rehearsal to prepare for a choir competition. However, J declines this invitation because J has to finish the homeworks. E does not merely ask a question to J, but E tries to invite J to go together to participate in choir rehearsal in their church.

In the second question, M asks a question to D, a friend whom M always addresses as Boss. As a matter of fact, M does not simply to deliver a question, but M invites D to pick up the passangers at the market. M usually looks for the passangers every afternoon at Karombasan Market. On the other hand, D understands that M does not simply ask a question but invite D to do something. Therefore, D refuses this invitation.

3.3. Question as a Prohibition

Prohibition has different intention from the imperatives. In an imperative, the speakers wish the addressee will do what he/she asks for. On the contrary, question as a prohibition is an utterance in which the speaker forbids the addressee to do something. See two conversations below:
(This conversation happens on Sunday morning. The church bell has rung, but that child only watches television. This child usually goes to church every Sunday to join a Sunday school at the church).
Father : Cuma ba uni, ndak mo pi skolah minggu?
  (You only watch television, why dont you go to a Sunday school?)

Child : Iyo, so mo mandi!
  (Yes I will, I am going to take a bath!)

(At 2 p m in the afternoon, the child has just returned from school, and he immediately gets his bicycle to play with his friends despite the scorching heat.)
Mother : Kiapa le so ambe speda?
  (Why do you take your bicycle?)
Child : Ndak lama kwak.
  (It is not going to be long!)
Mother : Panas keras ini anak!
  (The heat is scorching, son!)

In the first conversation, the father does not simply want to know whether the son will go to the Sunday school or not. The utterance implies the prohibition since he hopes that his child stops watching television. The child understands that his father does not simply ask a question; therefore, he replies "I am going to take a bath". It has been a habitual activity that he must go to church every Sunday morning to join Sunday school.

In the second conversation, the utterance of the mother does not simply a question why her child immediately gets the bicycle. As a matter of fact, she wants to forbid the child to play because the heat of the sun is so scorching. The child is able to understand that his mother's question is a prohibition, so the child replies 'it is not going to take long for him to ride bicycle'. The child understands the mother's question is a prohibition because this child usually takes a nap before playing with friends.

3.4. Question as a request

Request refers to an utterance which aims at asking the addressee to give something which the speaker wants to. Request can be in the form of demand or a spontaneous request without prior agreement. Take a look at following conversation.
(A is the neighbor of B. B borrows money from A, and A needs money to buy something for the child. A wants B to return the money because A will buy the child the school apparel. A must be careful to tell his intention to B, so it will not hurt B's pride who is known to be a bit temperamental.)
A : So laku ngana pe ayam da jual?
  (Have your chicken sold out?)
B : Kiapa nagana mo cari tau?
  (Why do you want to know?)
A : Tak pe anak kwak minta bili capatu!
  (My child asks me to buy his/her a new pair of shoes.)
B : Iyo, kita kotek da ba utang pa ngana!
  (Oh, right, I borrow a sum of money from you!)

In the conversation above, A opens the conversation by asking a question to conceal his intention to ask for money that B has borrowed. B's utterance implies that B understands well that A asks for the money B has borrowed. A does not directly ask B whether he has money or not; instead A asks whether B has sold all chickens. Therefore, A's question to open a conversation implies a request. By asking a question, A demands for an understanding, so B will not hurt. This utterance is commonly used by the speakers of Manado Malay language to avoid the misunderstanding between interlocutors.

3.5. Question as a refusal

Denial refers to an act to refute something or to state that someone's accusation is wrong. Denial is always associated

with negative statement. Denial can be done to reveal the truth. A denial can be performed by using a question to instill certain effects. The speakers of Melayu Menado language usually use a question as a form of refusal while having an interaction with their family or other people in public spaces.

(There is a misunderstanding between two young men at the motorcycle taxi basecamp. One of them loses his wallet in which he keeps his money. There are some other people in that place)

A : Ado, kita ape dompet ndak ada?

    (Oh No, I lose my wallet?)

B : Sapa tu da ambe ngana pe dompet?

    (Who has stolen your wallet?)

A : Kita kan ndak tuduh pa ngana?

    (I don t accuse you!)

B : Butul, mar kita tersinggung!

    (Yes you don't, but I feel offended!)

In the conversation above, A is a hectic situation looking for his missing wallet. A tells them that he has lost his wallet. A's utterance leads B to deliver a question, stating that no one steals his wallet. B delivers an interogative sentence aiming to deny the accusation since B thinks that A is suspicious that one of them might steal his wallet. The question from B, "Sapa tu da ambe ngana pe dompet?" is an obvious denial to A's suspicion. It also shows his discontentment and emphasis that none of them steals A's wallet.

3.5. Question as an advice

Giving an advice to someone is done by using not only a declarative sentence but also an interogative sentence. The speakers of Manado Malay language also uses this in many conversational situation.

(A young man makes some noises, so a man who is also a religious leader (Penatua) tries to give an advice. This man advises the young man to stop making a scene.)

Pnt. : Ndak malu ngna orang banyak lia baribut?

    (Dont you feel ashamed making a scene while many people see what you have done?)

Pmd : Maaf jo, kita so salah Penatua!

    (Forgive me, I have made a mistake Penatua!)

Pnt (Penatua) does not simply ask A, but he wants to advise this young man that his making a scene is a shame because many people witness what he has been doing. Pnt does not really want to give a question, but he tries to advise the young man. Pnt's question can be well understood by the young man, so he stops making a scene and realize that what he has done is wrong. Therefore, he apologizes to Penatua.

3.6. Question as an expression to borrow something

Using a declarative statement to borrow something is sometimes considered as an impoliteness. To disguise the real intention, the speakers of Manado Malay language uses indirect utterance such as a question when they want to borrow something from others.

(A man wants to borrow his neighbor's motorcycle because he wants to take his wife to a Public Health Center.)

A : Ngana mo pake ngana pe motor?

    (Are you going to go somewhere by motorcyle?)

B : Kiapa ngana pi mana so?

    (Why, where do you want to go?)

A : Mo antar maitua pi Puskesmas!

    (Taking my wife to Public Health Center!)

From a conversation above, it can be inferred that A gives B a question to find out whether B is going to use his motorcycle or not. A's question does not simply mean that B is going to use his motorcycle or not. A's main intention by asking the question is to borrow the motorcycle because he is going to take his wife to Public Health Center. B understands that A is going to borrow the motorcycle since A has borrowed it once. The question of A disguises the main intention to borrow something because A will not be ashamed if B refuses to lend him the motorcycle.

3.7. Question as an agreement

An agreement will be reached if the interlocutors gain mutual understanding. Showing agreement can be done by using both declarative and interogative sentences. Take a look at following conversation.

(At home, a mother advises her child who comes late from school.)

Mother : So jam brapa ini baru pulang?

    (What time is it now? You have just returned home?)

Child : Da singga blajar pa teman!

    (I went to my friend's house to study together!)

Mother : Boleh lebe cepat pulang besok?

    (Could you please go home sooner tomorrow?)

Child : Iyo!

    (Yes!)

In the conversation above, the second question that this mother delivers is, "Boleh lebe cepat pulang besok?. This question is delivered to negotiate with her child, so her child agrees to go home sooner if he/she has finished studying at school. In this conversation, the mother does not use threatening sentence; instead, she uses a question, so her child will not be angry or anxious. The question uses the word 'boleh/please' to soften the tone, so it serves as an advice.

3.7. Question as a confirmation

The speakers of Manado Malay language also uses an interogative sentence to confirm something. A confirmation is necessary to avoid doubt or uncertainty which might happen between the interlocutors.

(A wants to have birthday party for his/her child. A invites B, the best friend to attend the birthday party.)

A : Ngana sabantar malam ada acara?

    (Do you have anything to do tonight?)

B : Kiapa ada acara apa dang?

A : Ta pe anak pe HUT. Datang kwak, Ngana le?

B : Nagana ndak percaya kita mo datang?

B's question, "Ngana ndak percaya pa mo datang?" does not imply whether A believes that B is really able to attend the birthday party or not. The question, "Ngana ndak percaya kita mo datang" emphasizes that B has confirmed to attend to the birthday party of A's child. Therefore, B's question can be implied as a confirmation.

3.8. Question as an expression of annoyance

A feeling of annoyance of the speaker to the addressee is frequently shown in a verbal action. This verbal action to express their exasperation is stated in an interrogative sentence. The speakers of Melayu Manado often show their exasperation in an interrogative sentence.

(A is a builder, and B asks him to fix the broken bathroom door. They agree that the repair costs Rp. 125.000. After A finishes repairing the door, A only receives Rp. 100.000 from B.)

A : Cuma bagini dang ngana mo bayar pa kita?
 (Do you only give me this much of money?)
B : Iyo no, cuma itu kit ape doi.
 (Yes it is true, that's the only money I have.)

In the conversation, A does not simply ask, "Cuma bagini dang ngana mo bayar pa kita?" A's question reflects his dissappointment since B violates the agreement of the repair cost they have decided together.

The results of the research show that the question implicature is so dominant since the speakers of Manado Malay speakers use them in various verbal interactions. Questions are not just submitted to request information but for various purposes. The speakers of the Manado Malay language choose to use the question implicature to maintain harmony in a communication. The facts show that the characteristics of Manado Malay speakers are open, spontaneous, blunt, and seem rude because mistakes in choosing speech patterns worsen the relationship between speakers even though they are a family. It is perfectly portrayed in a proverb " rusak saudara karena kata" (what we say can lead to dispute) (Pateda, 1990: 4). Thus, Using question implicatures is one method to prevent misunderstandings in the communcaition which might happen among the speakers of Manado Malay language.

The pragmatic implications of the questions used by the speakers of have ten purposes, those are giving orders, invitations, prohibitions, requests, rejection, advice, an expression to borrow something, showing agreement, a confirmation, and showing annoyance. The speakers of Manado Malay language use the questions to convey a variety of purposes aiming at making their utterance more polite, respecting the locutor, showing a humbleness, affirming something, and showing sarcasm.

Based on the language phenomenon, the study of the meaning of the question in Manado Malay language should not only concentrate on void questions are out of context. Asking means is really used for various functions. Thus, it can be stated that asking refers to do a verbal action in the hopes a more complex response than a verbal response. The question demands for concrete action from the addressee to do something. Thus, the implication of the question of speakers of Manado Malay language shows a reasonable relationship between each idea in a question. It supports Mey (1996: 99) [6] who reveals that pragmatic implications are a logical relationship between propositions.

IV. CONCLUSION

Pragmatically, questions are not merely given submitted to request information, but they have various purposes. The speakers of the Manado Malay language choose to use the question implicature to maintain harmony in a communication. The pragmatic implications of the questions used by the speakers of have ten purposes, those are giving orders, invitations, prohibitions, requests, rejection, advice, an expression to borrow something, showing agreement, a confirmation, and showing annoyance. The speakers of Manado Malay language use the questions to convey a variety of purposes aiming at making their utterance more polite, respecting the locutor, showing a humbleness, affirming something, and showing sarcasm.

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