

EXPLORING TABOO IN ANGKOLA LANGUAGE: INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING IN ETHIC EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT. This research explores Angkola Language (AL) from intercultural perspective used for ethics education. Research is qualitative utilizing ethnographic method. There are three taboos in AL, such as: the taboos of fishing, naming ‘tiger’ and ‘snake’, and communication within family community. Taboos culturally foster the ethical education of children either at schools or even neighborhood.

Key words: Angkola language, culture, ethic education, taboo

INTRODUCTION. Taboo is generally defined as a prohibition on things to be done and uttered. The idea of taboo is widespread in culture as well as in society’s religious or belief systems. Taboo is often associated with sacredness or holiness, and taboo is often associated with the idea of obscene, dirty, and unclean words.

Taboo in Angkola Language (AL) is called ‘pantang’, namely something that cannot be done or said. For example, in AL society is forbidden to say the word ‘tiger’ in opened spaces, because this is considered taboo, consequently, it is replaced with the word ‘ompung’ which means ‘grandfather’. Likewise, the word ‘snake’ is called ‘andor’, which is a type of hanging creeping plant similarly to rattan. This method is used to replace taboo words with something more subtle and good. Wijana & Rohmadi, 2017 stated that this way of softening taboo words is commonly called *euphemism*. Then euphemism can be an ethical way of communicating by not expressing rude things directly.

One other taboo phenomenon that still exists and is believed to exist in several areas of the AL community is the ‘lubuk larangan’. The meaning of lubuk larangan is the river flows and certain parts are in the form of deeper holes and are used as places for keeping fish by the community in a village. Lubuk larangan is an area in a river flow which is managed by the community with various formal and informal regulations. When the community first made lubuk larangan is not yet known for certain (Kurniasari et al., 2015). There are restrictions and prohibitions, however, for people from taking fish in this prohibited area before the time. If anyone violates the rules, they will be exposed to disasters such as disease and even die as a result of their actions of stealing fish from the forbidden area. Lubuk larangan is in line with ‘SDGs’ (The Sustainable Development Goals). The concept of the forbidden area on this river is to protect, preserve and increase sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat

desertification, and stop and reverse land degradation and stop the loss of biodiversity (Statistik, 2014).

The next taboo in AL is forbidden communication in the family kinship, such as conversations between the son-in-law and the daughter-in-law and having to use an intermediary. The interlocutor in AL is likened to an inanimate object, for example the word ‘pole’ and ‘stove’ are used for a man’s in-laws (Anakboruna, 1993). Ethical speech like this definitely has a reason and efforts to explore this taboo and be useful as an example in ethical education in society.

Taboo literally means a social and religious custom that forbids or forbids discussion of certain practices, forbids associating with certain people, places, or things. Humaeni, 2015 wrote that the word taboo is defined as ‘a prohibition’ and these taboos are widely found in human culture and religion. The word taboo was historically introduced by Captain James Cook, an English ship captain who explored in 1777. Taboo comes from the word ‘tapu’ which means ‘not allowed’. This word is used by people in Tonga, the Polynesian islands. This taboo concept has never changed since it was firstly introduced. However, the spread of the concept of taboo outside Polynesia has become widely understood. The expansion of this concept is due to whether or not there are sanctions for violations of taboo matters (Sutarman, 2017; Ullman, 2007).

Taboo includes words or phrases that are generally considered blasphemous, obscene, vulgar, or offensive. Swear words are also known as dirty words, obscene words, and ‘four letter words’ in English terms. Meanwhile, swear words are a category of taboo words that are used to express feelings (Megika et al., 2018). It can be concluded that taboo is “a prohibition resulting from social custom or aversion” while swearing is “a word that is considered rude or offensive”. Swear words are usually used when people are angry. Even verbal violence (with taboo words) often appears in households and becomes a form of domestic violence. Taboos also appear on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) which can then become a form of hate speech.

Comparing the above theories regarding taboo, it can be concluded that each taboo parameter raised by experts has differences. For example, the taboo on sacredness has only been reviewed by Vogel (2014) and Allan, K., & Burrige (2006). Taboos about sacredness certainly have social and cultural backgrounds. Meanwhile, the taboo about sexuality reviewed by Jay (1996) and Allan, K., & Burrige (2006) has a social communication background.

The taboo explained by (Jay, 1996; Jay, 2009) is more directed to the expression of curse words and curses, where this can be seen from the division of taboo categories he describes; cursing, profanity, blasphemy, obscenity, sexual harassment, vulgar language, and name-calling and insults.

The word ethics was derived from the Greek word ‘ethos’ which means it appears from a habit, habit that is closely related to human actions, attitudes or actions. According to Aristotle, ethics is divided into two, namely terminus technicus and manner and custom. Terminus technicus is ethics which is seen as a science that studies the problems of human

behavior which leads to the study of human actions. Manner and custom are in-depth study related to habits, customs, etiquette and values related to the good and bad of a person's behavior or actions.

In philosophical studies, ethics is an inseparable part of educational studies, because ethics is the spirit of education itself. The aim of education is changing behavior, namely changing human behavior towards a dignified human being.

Chang & Cap (2018) stated that ethics is the character or personality of an individual. This is in line with Bloom's opinion that the highest level of education in the affective domain is characterization. One of Bloom's taxonomies in the affective realm is getting used to, changing behavior, having noble character. Character formation is key in the realm of Bloom's concept of affective education.

The ethics education currently being faced is no longer in accordance with culture and educational goals in general. Social media, which is a source of teaching in the 5.0 era, provides poor learning for Generation Z (called Gen Z). The appearance of politicians providing education is out of eastern tradition. The appearance of today's politicians on social media will set a bad precedent for the younger generation.

Survey results show that the young generation (Gen Z) in the current era has quite significant impoliteness, three quarters of parents who send their children to school said that today's generation of children do not have good manners (Packer, 2014). The results of the Digital Civility Index (DCI) survey show that Indonesian society has the lowest level of civility in Asia. Public figures should be at the forefront in providing ethical education to the younger generation and teachers should also provide culture-based ethical education to students.

METHODS. In this research, the application of qualitative methods was carried out descriptively, meaning that the data analyzed and the results of the analysis were in the form of ethnographic descriptions that were not in the form of numbers. Descriptive research is research that attempts to describe solutions to current problems based on data (Narbuko & Achmadi, 2018). Descriptive research also produces descriptive data in the form of speech, writing and behavior of people observed in a particular context which is studied from a complete, comprehensive and holistic point of view (Amir, 2019).

The approach used in this research is a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods. Research on taboos in the AL was carried out within a sociopragmatic framework. This is because sociopragmatics does not only prioritize the language but also the social environment that supports the use of that language. Sociopragmatics is the sociological interface of pragmatics which is based on the language used in different cultures of language communities in different social situations, among different social classes, gender, etc. (Leech, 1983).

RESULT. The geography of the AL is still dominated by the forests of Sumatra Island in Indonesia and the Angkola tribal people have long been engaged in farming and gardening. Their life is very closely related to forest conditions as they often hunt and look for things around the forest. The Angkola people have long since cleared agricultural

land, plantations and forest dwellings which definitely have a variety of animals in them, therefore AL is influenced by these conditions.

In the biological food chain, tigers and snakes are at the top, which means these animals are dangerous to other creatures and even to humans themselves. This kind of condition means that houses in rural areas of the Angkola community are also made with floors that are high from the ground. This condition is to avoid snakes and tigers.

According to this research informant of AL, the word grandfather refers to a tiger to show the respect. The word rattan for snake aims to avoid surprising or shocking of someone. This such linguistic methods are called euphemisms and the euphemisms is functioned as an ethical way of communication.

Lubuk Larangan are areas in rivers that have regulations that prohibit people from taking fish prematurely. It is taboo to take fish, if someone dares to take fish, they will be cursed with illness and could even die. This community compliance is able to be applied in culture-based ethics education. The value of compliance is an ethical standard, where people obey the rules even though sometimes the rules are not making sense. The Angkola people have made rules like this since long time ago, but advances in technology and communication have made these taboo rules disappear due to globalization.

The next taboo is the prohibition on communication between participants in a family. The prohibited participants are:

1. A man to his brother's wife
2. Wife/husband of the in-laws
3. Daughter-in-law to son-in-law
4. Son-in-law to daughter-in-law
5. Aunt's daughter
6. Co-parents-in-law
7. Siblings of different genders

DISCUSSION. Based on the results of interviews with informants, the reason for this taboo communication is that marriage is prohibited in kinship relationships (both in Angkola traditional speech and in the teachings of Islam as the majority religion). The conclusion is that the meaning of this family relationship taboo is as follows:

1. Respect
2. Maintain self-esteem
3. Show politeness/respect
4. Form of service

As a result of the prohibition of the participants above from getting married, this taboo rule emerged to prevent the existence of heart desires and lust. If something undesirable happens, then they have to get married, which will destroy the Angkola traditional norms. The destruction of the norm order will also damage the social order of the Angkola community hence this needs to be maintained and used as wisdom in the social community.

The taboo on taking fish in rivers is useful for protecting, preserving and increasing sustainable use of land, water and air ecosystems. Maintaining water and river ecosystems is a very significant effort today and is part of environmental ethics education.

The taboo on mentioning the names of certain animals such as tigers and snakes aims to protect these animals. Preservation of the forest environment is an important issue today, and through exploration of the taboos of the AL will be able to help prevent the extinction of these animals.

Ethical values can be taken from the prohibition on communication within the Angkola community family. This prohibition has spiritual reasons from the Islamic religion. Culture influences these relationships so cross-cultural understanding can provide ethical lessons for the current generation.

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