Semantic Structure of Process Verbs in Minangkabau Language

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Abstract

Verbs will be examined through an interrogative construction, which will elicit the states, processes, and actions of verb members in sequence to analyze the proper identification of verb membership. This research is a qualitative descriptive study. Through the use of semantic analysis, this study aims to investigate and describe process verbs in the Minangkabau language. Semantic investigation relates to the roles played by each filler in these functions. The information presented in this paper is based on oral interviews and written data. The primary data source is oral information from Minangkabau dialect informants. The semantic features of process verbs are [+dynamic], indicating the subtypes of event, [+punctual], indicating non-agentive motion subtypes, and [-punctual], indicating process verbs of enduring events. It can be concluded that process verbs in Minangkabau possess semantic components that are [+dynamic] and [+/- punctual]. The semantic structure of Minangkabau process verbs can be explained in their original sense, which serves as the basis for their construction. Process verbs are constructed from the words "HAPPEN" and "DO," which have equivalent or similar meanings. The explanation of Minangkabau process verbs can be accomplished with the help of a set of available original meanings in the natural semantic metalanguage syntax.

Keywords: *Semantic of verb; natural semantic metalanguage; achievement verb*

1. INTRODUCTION

Meaning, like human thought, has a structure. The semantic structure of language represents the mental representation of language (Tampubolon, 1988:11). Understanding semantic structure is crucial, especially for understanding how people comprehend their environment or how human thought is communicated through language (cf. Chafe, 1970:73). Semantic structure refers to the arrangement of word meanings. This configuration is formed based on the relationship between verbs and arguments and often combines multiple semantic aspects.

In Mulyadi's (2009) research, it is stated that correctly identifying the membership position of verbs is essential. According to Tampubolon et al. (1979), as cited by Mulyadi (2009:57), verbs encompass all words that function as predicates in sentences. Verbs will be examined through an interrogative construction, which will elicit states, processes, and actions of verb members in sequence. Process verbs here only refer to verbs that are not stative verbs or action verbs. It is classified as process verbs. Universally, this statement is nearly "equivalent" to Vendler's achievement class (Foley & Van Valin, 1984:37-38) or Leech's "inceptive" class (Foley & Van Valin, 1984:37-38).

Process verbs refer to the transformation of an entity from one state to another. This occurs as a result of surpassing a previous limit. It is crucial to investigate the semantic structure of verbs to understand the nature and meaning of different verbs that may exist exclusively in a particular language. The explication of verb meanings becomes clearer with semantic theories such as Natural Semantic Metalanguage, developed by Wierzbicka (1996) and Goddard (1996). This study aims to examine the semantics of process verbs in the usage of the Minangkabau language (BM).

The type of verb explored in this research is process verbs. Givon (1984:51-52) explains his view on process verbs based on verb classification, namely process verbs, action verbs, and stative verbs. Verbs driven by event semantics are associated with events. Verbs as events indicate a shift in time. Thus, there is a connection between changing events and temporality. As verbs, events are categorized into three types: process verbs, action verbs, and stative verbs. These three verbs have significant differences based on temporal consistency. Stative verbs are said to be the most constant over time, meaning they do not change with the passage of time, while action verbs are dependent on time or are unstable, and process verbs involve a transition from one state to another, making them less stable (Givon, 1984:51-52).

The parameters used in this study are dynamism, intentionality, and punctuality. The dynamic feature is associated with internal changes in an object that occur within a specific timeframe. Both process verbs and action verbs possess this feature. This paper employs the theory of Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) developed by Anna Wierzbicka (1996). This concept emphasizes that meaning cannot be explained without reference to basic meanings. The meaning of a term is a construction based on its original meaning. This statement implies that complex analyses of meaning can be expressed without circumlocution (Wierzbicka, 1996:10).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Theory of Natural Semantic Metalanguage

To enable separate and comprehensive analyses of meaning, the final component is a set of basic meanings, which are predetermined meanings that humans acquire at birth. According to this perspective, the meaning of a word is the structure of its original meaning, unaffected by other lexical meanings. In cross-linguistic studies, Wierzbicka (1996:35) compiled a collection of basic meanings. She initially presented 55 basic meanings. However, the number of basic meanings increased, and Goddard noted that there are 66 basic meanings, as described below.

Tabel 1. Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM)

KOMPONEN	ELEMEN MAKNA ASALI
Substantive	I "aku" , YOU 'kau/kamu', SOMEONE 'seseorang' SOMETHING/THING 'sesuatu', PEOPLE' orang' BODY 'badan
Relational	KIND 'jenis', PART 'bagian' Substantive
Determiners	THIS 'ini', THE SAME 'sama', OTHER/ELSE 'lain'
Quantifiers	ONE 'satu', TWO 'dua', ALL 'semua' MANY/ MUCH 'banyak', SOME 'beberapa',
Evaluators	s GOOD 'baik', BAD 'buruk'
Descriptors	BIG 'besar', SMALL 'kecil'
Mental Predicates	THINK 'pikir' KNOW tahu' WANT 'mau/ingin' FEEL 'rasa', SEE 'melihat' HEAR 'dengar
Speech	SAY 'ujar', WORDS 'kata-kata', TRUE 'benar'
Action,Events,Movements Contact	Do 'berbuat', HAPPEN 'terjadi', MOVE 'bergerak', TOUCH 'menyentuh'

Location, Existence, Possessions, Specification.	BE (SOMEHERE)' sesuatu tempat, THERE IS/EXIST 'ada', HAVE and 'memiliki' BE (SOMEONE/ SOMETHING) 'menjadi sesuatu/seseorang
Life and Death	LIVE 'hidup' DIE 'mati
Space	sebelum', AFTER 'sesudah' A LONG TIME 'lama', A SHORT TIME 'sekejap', FOR SOME TIME 'beberapa saat' MOMENT 'waktu/saat' WHERE/PLACE 'di mana/ tempat' HERE 'di sini, ABOVE 'di atas' BELOW 'di/ke bawah' FAR 'jauh', NEAR 'dekat' SIDE 'sebelah INSIDE 'di dalam'
Logical Concept	NOT 'tidak', MAY BE 'mungkin' CAN 'dapat' BECAUSE 'sebab' IF 'jika'/kalau
Intensifiers	/ VERY 'sangat', MORE Augmentor 'lagi'
Similarity	LIKE/AS 'seperti'

The Theory of Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) posits that there exists a set of innate and universal concepts known as basic meanings, which serve as the foundational building blocks of human language and thought. These basic meanings are considered to be predetermined and are acquired by individuals from birth. According to NSM, the structure of a word's original meaning remains unchanged and unaffected by other lexical meanings. Anna Wierzbicka, a prominent linguist, has made significant contributions to the development of NSM. In her work, she compiled a comprehensive list of basic meanings that cut across various languages and cultures. Initially, Wierzbicka (1996:35) identified 55 basic meanings. These basic meanings capture essential aspects of human experience and cognition, such as time, space, emotions, actions, and relations. As research progressed, the number of basic meanings expanded. Goddard (a collaborator of Wierzbicka) noted that there are now 66 basic meanings, which include additional concepts such as fairness, freedom, and obligation. These basic meanings provide a foundation for cross-linguistic studies, allowing

researchers to compare and analyze how different languages encode and express these universal concepts.

The significance of NSM lies in its ability to uncover and describe the core semantic primitives shared by all languages. By identifying these basic meanings, researchers can explore the diversity and universality of human languages, gain insights into cultural variations in meaning, and facilitate the translation and interpretation process. NSM has found applications in various disciplines, including linguistics, anthropology, psychology, and translation studies, contributing to a deeper understanding of the nature of language and human cognition.

The Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) hypothesis, proposed by Wierzbicka in 1996, is used to investigate the semantic structure of Minangkabau process verbs. The basic assumption of the MSA theory is related to semiotic principles. According to Wierzbicka (1996: 10), "a sign cannot be reduced to or analyzed into any combination of things which are not themselves signs, consequently, it is impossible to reduce meanings to any combination of things which are not themselves meanings." Polysemy non-compositionality, which is a single lexical form that can express two different primary meanings, is another fundamental concept of NSM theory, in addition to the concept of original meaning. In this case, there is no compositional relationship between the two different original meanings because each has its own grammatical framework. For example, in Indonesian, the verb "menyaksikan" expresses the original meanings of both "to see" and "to think" (Mulyadi, 2000: 81). The Semantic Original Meaning Syntax (Goddard, 1996: 24) is a further development of the original meaning system and is the next basic concept that needs to be understood. According to the NSM theory, meaning is defined as a highly complex or intricate structure composed of several structured components that are interrelated. The Original Meaning Syntax of NSM is the combination of lexical items with their original meanings, which are then combined to create simple propositions based on their morphosyntactic set.

The three concepts mentioned above, namely original meaning, non-compositional polysemy, and Original Meaning Syntax, are the main tools applied in meaning analysis when using the NSM approach in linguistics. The description of BM process verb meanings can be done meticulously using the NSM framework and related tools. The different explanations of each verb reveal the difference in meaning between one verb and another.

3.   METHODS

This study is a qualitative descriptive research. By employing semantic analysis, the aim of this research is to investigate and describe process verbs in the Minangkabau language. The semantic investigation pertains to the roles played by each filler in these functions.

The information presented in this paper is based on oral interviews and written data. The primary data source consists of oral information provided by Minangkabau dialect BM informants. The informants meet the following criteria: willingness to be an informant, native speakers of the Minangkabau language, and sufficient knowledge of BM. Interview and observation methods, as well as recording techniques, were utilized to collect oral data from the informants. An interview question was prepared, requesting informants to read from a list of lexemes with their original meanings that fit into the construction of process verbs. Free

interview techniques were employed to gather information about the meanings of different types of process verbs. The use of recording devices was an advanced method that needed to be considered. This note-taking technique was employed to collect information from the original text of the Randai Sabai Nan Aluih story, which served as the data source.

4.   FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following section will discuss important topics. The main focus of this research is the semantic structure of BM process verbs in general. The NSM theory is employed to analyze the semantic structure of BM verbs.

4.1 Process Verbs

Process verbs encompass subtypes of event process verbs, material process verbs, and non-agentive motion process verbs. Process verbs include the core meanings of "to happen" and "to move." The expressions of process verbs describe the change of entities caused by preceding events, in which both are linked with the core meaning element of "because." Process verbs depict the change of entities within a temporal framework (Mulyadi, 2000: 106). The semantic characteristic of +dynamic is possessed by event process verbs, the semantic characteristic of +punctual is found in non-agentive motion process verbs, and the semantic characteristic of -punctual is exhibited by material process verbs, as these verbs describe events that occur over a relatively long duration

This section is the main part for the author state the result but does not interpret them. Results are the answers of your research questions, and discussion interprets your results. Discussion should compare your recent findings with previous studies to show your gaps and novelty. If you have subfield you can write them as follows:

A.   *Tiok lekok tiok baranak!*

"Tiap tikungan tiap beranak"

The phrase "*Tiok lekok tiok baranak! Tiap tikungan tiap beranak*" can be analyzed using the NSM framework to capture its semantic components.

The verb "baranak" can be broken down into its core semantic components. In this case, it represents a change in a state from not having children to having children. The verb captures the concept of the entity undergoing a transformation, from being childless to becoming a parent. Additionally, the phrase implies a temporal aspect, indicating that the change in state happens over an extended period of time. This aligns with the characteristic of non-punctuality (-punctual) in NSM, where the process unfolds gradually without a specific point or moment of completion. Overall, the phrase reflects the NSM concept of a dynamic process involving a change in state and the temporal duration associated with it. The verb "baranak" encapsulates the idea of giving birth and the gradual transition from a state of not having children to having children.

B. *Di sinan gantiang nak nyo putuih*

Disitu ganting yang mau putus

The phrase "Di sinan gantiang nak nyo putuih. Disitu ganting yang mau putus" can be analyzed using Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) to identify its semantic components.

"Di sinan gantiang nak nyo putuih": This phrase can be translated as "There, the rope is about to break."

"Di sinan" signifies the location or place being referred to.

"Gantiang" represents the rope, which serves as the subject of the sentence.

"Nak" conveys the meaning of "about to" or "on the verge of."

"Nyo" indicates the impending action or state.

"Putuih" implies the breaking or snapping of the rope.

In NSM terms, these phrases describe a situation where a rope is in a precarious state, on the brink of breaking or snapping. The location is indicated, and the imminent action or state of the rope is emphasized. The use of "nak" and "mau" conveys the notion of an impending event, while "putuih" and "putus" denote the specific action of breaking or snapping. In Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM), the component "putuih" does indeed indicate a punctual or sudden event of breaking or snapping. The verb "putuih" represents an abrupt change in state, suggesting that the breaking or snapping of the rope happens instantaneously or at a specific point in time. Therefore, the verb "putuih" can be categorized as a +punctual verb within the NSM framework

C. Denai manubo sampai paniang

"Saya mencoba sampai pening"

The phrase "Denai manubo sampai paniang. Saya mencoba sampai pening" can be analyzed using Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) to identify its semantic components.

"Denai manubo sampai paniang": This phrase can be translated as "Keep pushing until it reaches the peak."

- "*Denai*" signifies the act of pushing or exerting effort.

- "*Manubo*" conveys the meaning of continuing or persisting in the action.

- "*Sampai*" indicates the goal or endpoint to be reached.

- "*Paniang*" refers to the peak or highest point.

In NSM terms, the first phrase emphasizes the continuous and persistent action of pushing until the peak or highest point is reached. It implies that the action has a specific goal and endpoint, indicating a punctual (+punctual) characteristic.

The second phrase describes the personal experience of trying until the point of feeling dizzy or overwhelmed. It implies a prolonged period of attempting, suggesting a non-punctual (-punctual) characteristic. Therefore, while the first phrase can be considered +punctual due to the specific endpoint, the second phrase can be seen as -punctual due to the ongoing nature of the action.

In terms of NSM characteristics, this phrase exhibits a dynamic feature, emphasizing the ongoing and active nature of the action. The verb "*manubo*" indicates persistence, suggesting that the pushing or exertion of effort continues until the peak is reached. Therefore, the phrase carries the characteristic of being dynamic.

The verb "*paniang*" meaning "to have a headache" signifies a state of not having a headache and then experiencing a headache. This verb exhibits the characteristic of being dynamic (+dynamic).

The analysis above suggests that verbs in Minangkabau can be identified based on their semantic characteristics, namely, (+dynamic), (+/-punctuality). The verbs mentioned above will be tested according to the semantic structure using the theory of Natural Semantic Metalanguage.

These process verbs represent an event initiated by another person or agent (Y), and the result of Y's action causes a change in X. As a result, these verbs have two polysemous meanings, HAPPEN and DO. When an entity undergoes a change as a result of a previous event, the preceding event is associated with the element BECAUSE in the semantic structure.

The lexeme "*putuih*" meaning "to break" the rope itself or the wrong rope is about to break. This is influenced by an Agent (Y), which may be a person or entity different from the language creator. As a result, the semantic component of this vocabulary is represented by the mapping "Y does something to X." The change in X occurs as a result of an event performed by Y.

"*Putuih*" meaning "to break"

That is when something happens to X (the rope). Because Y does something to the rope, it can be divided into two parts. This is how X happens.

The term "*paniang*" meaning "to have a headache" is used to describe something bad happening to a person or a living thing.

"*Paniang*" meaning "to have a headache"

At that time, something bad happens to X.

Because X experiences something bad,

X thinks about something, so X does it

X does not want this to happen

5.   CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that process verbs in Minangkabau (BM) have semantic components that are dynamic (+dynamic) and can exhibit positive or negative punctuality characteristics (+/- punctual). The semantic structure of BM process verbs can be explained by referring to their original inherent meanings, which form the basis for their construction. Process verbs in BM are formed by the words "HAPPEN" and "DO," which have equivalent or similar meanings. Explaining BM process verbs can be facilitated by utilizing the available set of inherent meanings within the framework of Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM). Thus, understanding the original meanings of the verbs can aid in depicting the events and changes that occur to the entities involved.

For example, in the phrase "Denai manubo sampai paniang" (I keep trying until I feel dizzy), the verb "paniang" (dizzy) describes a situation where someone transitions from not having a headache to experiencing a headache. This verb exhibits the dynamic characteristic (+dynamic), indicating a change in state or condition.

In analyzing the meaning of BM process verbs, it is important to refer to the semantic components associated with their word constructions. By understanding the inherent meanings and semantic characteristics of process verbs, a better understanding of the events expressed in the sentence can be achieved.

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