

The Roles of Javanese Women Reflected in Javanese Metaphors

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Abstract Javanese people have diverse thought about women. One of them is the Javanese concept of the women's role which represented through the use of metaphors. This metaphor in Javanese society is an expression of Javanese society in realizing its imagination through language media. This paper aimed to find out the role of Javanese women as reflected in Javanese language metaphors. This research was a qualitative research using the conceptual metaphor theory from Lakoff and Johnson. The result showed that there was a reflection of the role of women in Javanese metaphors which presented the role of women as mothers, wives, children, and women themselves.

Keywords: *Javanese woman, metaphors, the role of woman, reflection*

1. Introduction

Similar to other society, Javanese society considered women to have a crucial role. It is not surprising that many women figure depicted in various social dimensions of Javanese society. For instance, in the field of history, there were some records of great Javanese women under the rule of Javanese kings which associated with the throne, property, and women. Likewise in the field of literature, women can become central figures in stories with various actions [1]. Javanese want a woman as a person who must be in the frame of kindness, nobility, and politeness. If women are outside the frame which has been formed in the conception of Javanese society, consequently, there is a negative labeling woman must accept. Therefore, there are times when women are so straightened out, sometimes women are aligned, but sometimes women are so marginalized.

Javanese culture becomes the basis for Javanese society to look at women. Javanese thought of women also appears in linguistic expressions in the form of metaphors. As the typical of Javanese who does not want to express directly the things that exist in their collective minds, the metaphor is chosen as a means to express things that are in the minds of the Javanese. What should a good woman like, and vice versa, what kind of a bad woman. The means to describe these things require different forms of language from everyday language, so the metaphor is chosen. This culture occurs as Javanese have a *pasemon* culture, as seen from the culture of communication in the form of *dhupak bujang*, *semu mantri*, and the *esem bupati*. Hence, the expressions of these metaphorical forms serve as a means of communication in Javanese society.

The metaphor itself can explain abstract things to be more concrete because it uses the source and target domains in its formation. The use of the source and target domains further clarifies the meaning of the metaphor if the relationship between the two domains is sought. Metaphor is better known as a conceptual metaphor. Metaphor as an abstraction from something abstract becomes more concrete. In order to make a thought concrete, a mapping of the relationship between the source and target domains needs to be carried out [2]. However, since this metaphor is related to society (in this case Javanese society), the context of the source domain selection cannot be separated from culture. Thus, as stated by Kövecses (2005) that the metaphor is never separated from the cultural context. Kövecses states that there is a relationship between metaphors and cultural models [3]. This statement is in line with Suhandano's opinion which states that metaphor in a particular language is a description of the thoughts, understanding, and appreciation of its speakers towards something that is influenced by culture. In this case, metaphor is not solely as a style of language, so that every speech that equates something with something else is a metaphor. The link between metaphors and culture is also proven in Nirmala's research, which states that "the language used is systematic evidence of how humans conceptualize what is thought, experienced, and what is done. In other words, language shows how humans construct their ideas. Conceptual metaphors are dynamic because they reflect what is being thought, felt, and done by users who are always changing according to different thoughts, feelings, and experiences in each culture [4]."

The parable of women in Javanese through this metaphor is very interesting to study. One of the highlights of this study of women's metaphors is the role of Javanese women which can be found in metaphorical expressions. As Suhandano has stated above, stating that through metaphors a community's perspective will be seen in understanding, thinking, and living something abstract, in this case, related to the role of Javanese women [5]. As it is well known that Javanese adhere to the patrilineal stem, so it is obvious that there is a discussion between the roles of women and men. In this patrilineal view, women are seen as complementary creatures. Through a study of metaphors that talk about women, one concept of Javanese women's role will be revealed. This metaphor can provide information about what kind of role should be played by Javanese women framed by Javanese culture?

2. Research Methods

This research was a descriptive study, for this study aimed to describe the facts objectively and systematically with regard to language behavior in the form of writing. To collect data, the method used was a *non-participant observation* method and continued with note-taking technique. In addition, the intuition method was also used as a companion for providing data. Based on the analysis method, this study was considered as a qualitative study using the *referential identity method* (referents match method), reflexive introspective. The referential equivalent method was used to show referents that were referred to by metaphorical expressions which formed the basis for formulating metaphors. The reflective-introspective method used to show how cognitive processes occurred to produce metaphorical forms.

3. Results And Discussion

3.1 Role as a wife

One of the women's roles is as a wife. After a woman marries, there will be a new role she will play, namely as a wife. In the perspective of Javanese society, that a wife must obey and serve her husband in various ways. Such a situation is certainly also influenced by patrilineal flow which is embraced by the Javanese [6]. That is, still puts women as inferior to men. Moreover, if a woman is married, then she should devote to her husband. In addition, it is expected there are more sacrifices done by married women compared to unmarried women [7]. The description of the women's role as wives is illustrated in the following metaphor.

a) *Kanca wingking*

'Friend behind'

A woman as a friend behind her husband

Metaphor *kanca wingking* describe the conception in Javanese's minds that a woman as a wife is behind the man (husband) as they roles in family and community.

The concept *kanca wingking* is supported by the *dasanama* women in Javanese, namely *wanita* 'wanita' and *wadon* 'wanita'. Etymologically the word *wadon* come from the Kawi language "Wadu" which means *kawula* or *abdi* (*servant*). This term is often interpreted that women are destined in this world as an *abdi* (servant) of the male teacher (husband). The term *wanita* (woman) comes from two Javanese words namely *wani* (brave) and *tata* (well-organized). In this sense, *women* have two meanings, namely *wani ditata* (brave/to be well-organized) and *wani nata* (brave/willing to regulate). In the term *wani ditata* to give an understanding that women must remain submissive and want to be regulated by their husbands, while the term *wani nata* gives the sense that a woman must have the courage to manage the household, educate children, and most importantly, fulfill the husband's biological needs [6].

The concept of *kanca wingking* distinguishes between women's areas as wives and men as husbands. Women are in the domestic territory of the household, while men are in the area outside the household (public). In the household, Javanese women are usually required to do 3 M, namely *Macak*, *Manak*, and *Masak* (do make-up, give birth, and cook) [7]. This means that in patriarchal concept adopted by the Javanese community, Sumodiningrat and Wulandari stated that the presence of women is more often used as a "shadow" of the man who should be behind in all matters. A woman cannot have "herself" when she is married. All decisions and steps are determined by her husband. In the past, male domination was very strong in the household, so that women almost lost their rights to themselves. However, over the times and the progress of education, slowly the dominance has changed into alignment and harmony. This phenomenon can be seen from the current condition where women work a lot to help their husbands earn a living, but the nature of women as wives and housewives is still well lived. The concept of *Kanca Wingking* is actually serving. From this concept of *kanca wingking*, there is actually an idea of parallels between women and men, even though it looks as if the woman were put in second class. Why is it called alignment? Because there is already a clear discussion between the role of women as wives and the roles of men as husbands. *Kanca wingking* is intended that women are more trusted for domestic household affairs, as the role of the serving wife. The basic concept of serving owned by a working woman in today's era still exists, although it has different forms. Consequently, the concept of 3 M for women, namely *masak*, *macak*, and *manak* is transformed into a different form today. This different form is harmonized with the present

times [8]. Today, working women will still be able to serve the domestic affairs they are responsible for, for instance, food and clothing hygiene, there are already food delivery services through online application and laundry service. By relying on such services, the most important matters of eating and clean clothes for the family can be well served. Even service in the form of the presence of household assistants is also a solution for working women today. Even though there is a household assistant, if the wife cannot regulate the role of the household assistant, then the service will also not be good and smooth. Whatever the form of women's service as a wife now, the important role in the domestic field can run well.

b) *Swarga nunut neraka katut*

This metaphor conceptualizes the role of women as wives, namely that a good wife will follow the husband's existence both physically and materially [9]. This means that, whatever the husband's situation, the wife must stay by his side. As an illustration of this metaphor is, for example, a husband becomes a leader, then his position will also be elevated to the position of a leader's wife. Conversely, if the husband is in a low position (for example only as a worker in the workplace), then the wife will automatically feel the same. Thus, the role of the wife here shows that she will be ready to accompany her husband in any situation and condition. If the husband's condition is presented as if he were in heaven (an established economy, a high position, the glory of life in the world), then the wife will feel the impact like living in heaven too, all needs and desires can be easily obtained or fulfilled. However, if the husband is in a state like in the hell, the wife will also feel the same. Thus, the meaning of heaven and hell in this metaphor is not in the true meaning of heaven and hell but a depiction of the conditions of one's life .

This metaphor reflects that a woman who acts as a wife must be able to accompany her husband in a state of joy and sorrow. Do not just want to accompany a husband in a state of liking, but when in a state of grief the husband is left alone.

c) *Garwa (Sigaraning Nyawa)*

This metaphor illustrates the Javanese thought, that the wife is known by the concept of "garwa" as an honor. "Garwa" is often understood as short for "sigaraning nyawa" or "soul mates". Behind the concept of the wife's role as "garwa" contains the meaning that a wife is like a soul mate for a husband who is a deep philosophical interpretation of the bond of marriage. The role of a woman as a wife after marriage is to be a friend of her husband. The concept of " sigaraning nyawa " shows the absence of subordinate and superior positions. This means that husband and wife must walk in harmony in carrying out the household matters. The role of a wife becomes a helper or friend for a husband in various conditions. An example that can be given to concretize this concept is that the wife must be able to act as a good discussion partner for her husband, a friend to tell and share, partners, to struggle in carrying out domestic life. The concept *sigaraning nyawa* is supported by the *dasanama* (ten names) of women which are said as *estri*. The term *estri* is derived from the Kawi language "stri", which means *penjunjung* (encourager), and *hangestreni* which means to push. Thus the term *estri* in humans must be able to encourage and be able to give encouragement (motivation) to the husband, especially when the husband is less enthusiastic [10].

3.2 Motherhood

The role of Javanese women as mothers is related to the figure of women who are married and have children. That is, the role of mother reflected in this metaphor is related between the figure of woman and child as heredity. The examples of the role of motherhood reflected in Javanese metaphors are as follows.

a. *Pamengku keturunan*

This metaphor shows the conception that women play a role as mothers, namely as *pamengku keturunan* (bearer of a descendant). As the symbol of the mother as the bearer of descendant is Dewi Kunti. Dewi Kunti is a figure in a puppet who is conceived as a perfect mother so that a woman will be considered a good mother if she is like Dewi Kunti. *Pamengku keturunan* interpreted the role of mothers in giving birth, raising, and educating children to be a tough and virtuous generation. This is where the role of mother is at stake, that as a parent, the mother must provide an example and love for her children so that in the future the children become useful figures for the nation, family, and religion.

b. *Gemi taberi nastiti ngati-ati*

This metaphor is generally attached to married women, who act as mothers. *Gemi* means economical, *Taberi* means earnest, *nastiti* means meticulous, *ngati-ati* means careful. The concept reflected in this metaphor means, when a woman is married and plays the role of a mother, then the mother must be *gemi taberi nastiti ngati-ati*. Why is that so? Because the role of a mother is also associated with the role of a wife, so that family life can continue well, a mother must play a role in taking care of the household properly. One role in taking care of the household matters is that a mother must be economical. A mother must be clever in managing the budget or household finances so that she can "tickle" the money and income she receives from her husband and what she gets herself. This metaphor reflects that women who become mothers must be serious in taking care of the household which includes taking care of their husband, children, and managing their finances as well as possible. Mothers must be able to distinguish between needs and desires. Thus, the role of a mother will run well and smoothly in the family.

2.3 Role as a child

The role of women as children reflected in Javanese metaphors can be seen in the following example.

a. *Sapikul sagendhongan*

This metaphor reflects the concept of inheritance allocation according to Javanese society. However, this metaphor also reflects the role of women as children in the family. This means that the daughter has a role to receive the inheritance allocation. The *sapikul* inheritance for boys, and *sagendhongan* for girls. This inheritance allocation is also influenced by Islamic law, that boys will get a greater share of inheritance than daughters. The word *sapikul* 'sepikul' and *sagendhongan* 'segendongan' indicate the amount of inheritance received by both boys and girls.

2.4 The role as a woman herself

A woman can be seen not only when she is a wife, mother, and child in the family, but the role of women in themselves is also seen in one example of a metaphor that shows the role of women in seeing themselves [11]. Seeing herself is meant that a woman must be able to judge and respect herself so that she can make herself a woman who is respected and respected by her environment. This is what is meant by the role of women in themselves. Below is an example of a metaphor.

a. *Lahang karoban manis*

Anyone would be happy with the woman mentioned in the metaphor of *lahang karoban manis*. This metaphor shows that women as women must take good care of themselves. Women should have a good-looking appearance and noble character. This beauty is not always physical, yet, a woman who is polite and has good manners will look

beautiful. Moreover, if the woman is physically beautiful, also enhanced by good manner, smart, then she will be an independent woman, not easily fascinated by misleading seduction [12]. The metaphor of *karoban manis* radiates a reflection that women must play a role in making themselves smart, virtuous, well-mannered, in order to make themselves dignified and valued by the surrounding community as noble individuals [13].

4. Conclusion

This article is a preliminary study of women metaphor in Javanese which used traditional Javanese phrases collected in various books of a set of traditional Javanese phrases like *panyandra*, *pepindhan*, *sanepa*, *saloka*, *liberation*, *paribasan*. Besides collected in books, sometimes metaphorical expressions that are still used in everyday life, especially with regard to *panatacara*, puppet shows, and ketoprak. Metaphors about women particularly those which highlight the women's roles actually still need to be explored. As it is still a preliminary study, the data presented are also not yet varied and complete, so this research is still far from supporting Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor. However, at least, this early writings paved the way in order to uncover and understand the ethnophilosophy of society through the metaphor provided in any language. Metaphors are not only linguistic phenomena but more fundamentally, the conceptual processes and experiences that make up our world. With such confidence, we have gained a deep insight that our conceptual system and all forms of symbolic interaction are based on our physical experience and have not been structured imaginatively. This new perspective on metaphors has had a major impact on linguistics because the study of metaphors has now become more of a problem finding empirical generalizations to explain phenomena based on different types of convergent evidence regarding conceptual and inferential structures.

We now begin to learn how metaphors are limited and motivated by the structure of our experience contained and how these metaphors, in turn, limit our reasoning. Therefore, a study related to metaphors about women in Javanese can be done and further developed to enrich the development of existing metaphorical concepts. Even the concept of universality of metaphors and variations of metaphors in various cultures needs to be enriched again.

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