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**'I definitely mean what I say': Conversational Implicature of
Minangkabau Women in Indonesia**

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Abstract

This study examined Minangkabau women's implicature while having interaction in a cooking process for a wedding party in Indonesia. The Minangkabau people are identical to the matrilineal system where the heredity derives from the mother's line. The gaps underlying this study are that as Minangkabau is popular with its traditional culinary, it is emphasized to interact during the cooking process in the wedding circumstances. Conversation analysis is emphasized to explore the implicature that emphasized on the gender interactions in traditional cooking sessions. The data were the Minangkabau women's utterances while interacting in the cooking process for the wedding party in some places at West Sumatera, Indonesia. A total of 137 Minangkabau women participated in the conversation. The interviews were conducted with three *Bundo Kanduangs* (woman appointed as the one to whom the particular clan members in Minangkabau ethnic discuss with), one custom leader, and two intellectual people. The concept of implicature related to how Minangkabau women speak was used to analyze the

data. Results revealed eight implied meanings of Minangkabau women's utterances when they interacted in the cooking area for wedding preparation. The implications were related to the relationship, the closeness, and the social status of the participants.

Keywords: *Implicature, Minangkabau Women, West Sumatra*

Introduction

In the act of conversation, each form of speech (utterance) implies something. This implication is the intention or proposition that is usually hidden behind the spoken utterances; and is not a direct part of the speech (Meibauer, 2019). In such symptoms, what is said is different from what is implied. Related to this, (Suhartono, 2020a) stated that what is said does not always mean that it is in accordance with what is said. The difference between speech and its implications can sometimes make it difficult for speakers to understand it (Fauzan, Lubis, Kurniawan, 2020). However, in general, speakers and hearers have shared experiences and knowledge so that the conversation can run smoothly.

The conversational implicature problem is considered the most important cores in the pragmatic field (Apresyan, 2019; Kravchenko & Blidchenko-Naiko, 2020; Muhyidin, 2020). The reason is that this problem is directly related to the practical use of language, both verbal and non-verbal (Malabar, 2020; Pramesti et al., 2019; Karasenga et al., 2020; Olamide, 2019). Grice (1975) declared that the implicature study is closely related to the principle of cooperation. The implicature is presented in speech between two or more people who exchange ideas. The occurrence of implicature has a variety of backgrounds. The cooperative principle emphasizes the four maxims: a) maxim of quality, b) maxim of quantity, c) maxim of relations, and d) maxim of manner.

In the implicature study, the context of any form cannot be released. Context plays a significant role in order to get the intention containing in a speech fully. The context may be cultural, social, psychological, geographical, and religious considerations (Krulatz, 2019; Singh, 2019). These contexts are of great concern in understanding and analyzing the implications of Minangkabau women's utterances during the cooking process for the wedding party preparation.

Background of the Study

Humans' language is not constant, but a language that always develops according to human needs as its users (Rhee & Сонга, 2019). Various phenomena that arise in practical life

will significantly affect a language (- & Tanto, 2018; Alsulami, 2015; Brown, 2015). Often the rules of language agreed upon stagnate in the face of language use at a reasonable level (Wardaugh & Fuller, 2015). Assessment of a language at the structural level often does not produce an optimal study. The experimental condition of using language often "comes out" from structural rules. Still, the communication process that occurs does not encounter any obstacles and instead results in more effective and efficient communication (Budiharso, 2016). The thing that is what drives a study of a language not only from a structural point of view, but must be linked to aspects outside the structure of language. One of the language studies that can accommodate aspects outside the language in the study is Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis (Barron, 2019; Bi, 2019; El-Dakhs et al., 2019; McConachy, 2019; Arellano-Tamayo, 2019; Tarman & Kılınç, 2018). In these two fields of study, the study of a language involves aspects outside the language that contribute to the meaning in a communication (Solikhah, 2016). Involving aspects outside the language is very appropriate when looking at the phenomenon of language use at a practical level that is quite diverse (Budiharso & Arbain, 2019).

Speech is essentially an oral language event between two or more participants who generally occur in a relaxed atmosphere (Solikhah & Budiharso, 2020a). The speech becomes a tool that allows the realization of the principles of cooperation and courtesy in language events. For this reason, it is necessary to understand the implicatures in speech so that what is said can be understood by the interlocutor.

Implicature

One part of the pragmatic study is the speech implicature. In communication, it can be ensured a speech will occur. The speeches often contain specific purposes that are different from the structure of the language used. In this condition, the use of language often has hidden intentions behind the structural use of language (Abualadas, 2020; Oreč, 2020; Yolanda, 2020). In such situations, a speech implicature study has the right role in studying language usage (Khairiah et al., 2020; Rashid, 2019; Sawant, 2020; Sumarta, 2019).

The concept of implicature was first introduced by Grice to solve the problem of language meaning which cannot be solved by semantic theory. Implications are used in linguistics to examine the structure of the conversation. Implications are other implications that can be derived from one utterance (Grice, 1975). Furthermore, Grice argues that an utterance can imply propositions that are not part of the utterance, stating that in the use of language, there is implicature called implicature which is determined by the conventional

meaning of the words used.

Crystal (2006) divides the implicature into two parts, namely the conversational implicature and the non-conversational implicature. Then, Yule (2006) developed the conversational implicature in two, namely the general conversational implicature and the specific conversational implicature. Each division of the implicature is then more specifically developed into 1) representative implicature; (2) directive-representative implicature; and (3) expressive-representative implicature (Bi, 2019; Poggi, 2019; Suhartono, 2020b). Representative or assertive implicature is an implicature which states a representative implied pragmatic function, that is, a pragmatic function that binds its speakers to the truth of the implicature contained in their utterances. Implicative directive-representative form, directive implicature can also be accompanied by pragmatic functions outside the directive sub-function itself. For example, the pragmatic functions of the representative, expressive, commissive, or elastic implications subfunction. Implicative Directives - Representatives are forms of directive implicatures and forms of representative implicatures that exist in one context at different utterances.

The divisions of implicature are in line with the intention of a speaker in communication. When saying something, a speaker is giving information and doing something (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1968). It is called a speech act (Norricks, 2015a; Pishghadam, 2011; Reda, 2014; Saddhono & Kasim, 2016). Speech acts have three pillars, locution (the act of saying something), illocution (the act of doing something), and perlocution (the effect of the action). Illocution is regarded as the essential core or unit of speech act (Meibauer, 2019; Norricks, 2015b). Illocution is the intention behind the utterances. Searle (1979) divided this intention into five: a) assertive (speaker commits to the truth of the expressed proposition); b) directives (speaker wants to cause the hearer to take a particular action, such as requests, commands, and suggestion); c) commissives (speaker commits to some future action like promises or vow); d) expressive (speaker expresses the attitudes and emotions towards the proposition such as congratulations, excuses, or thanks); and e) declarations (speaker's utterance changes the reality in accord with the proposition of the declaration, like baptisms, pronouncing someone guilty, or pronouncing someone husband and wife).

A conversational implicature will very likely appear in a conversation, especially in a particular social group. In a social group in which there are a variety of factors that cause a certain closeness between its members, it is possible to occur an implicature of the conversation in the communication process that occurs (Solikhah & Budiharso, 2020b). It can be said that certain factors, including closeness, will affect a form of communication that occurs.

Even **implicature** is commonly used **in** regular communication or normal situation, and some people can have a joke by using implicature (Puspasari & Ariyanti, 2019; Tosic, 2020). The joke has the various implied meaning, such as (1) acknowledging personal shortcomings, (2) the desire to get the attention, and (3) criticism. Such kind of implicature may bring about the comic effect as the hearers know context very well (Mathieson, 2020). Otherwise, there is no response from the audiences or hearers to indicate the joke.

Implicature has to be common that is closely related to a certain cultural and social context. The implicature can be easily understood when the participants come from a similar social group. A social group might have many factors that bring each other closer to its members. However, there is a particular consideration to use implicature like power, social distance, and imposition rate (Leech, 2014). Speakers and the norms of a specific society may also be influential (Oktavianus & Revita, 2013). These factors will affect the group's ongoing communication process. It can be seen from one ethnic in Indonesia, namely Minangkabau. Minangkabau people tend to speak indirectly. The indirectness is reflected by the use of metaphorical or figurative language and implicature (Munir, 2016; Revita, 2015a, 2017). Implicature as the strategy to speak implicitly has become the attitude of the Minangkabau people. For them, implicit utterances indicate wisdom (Arifninetrirosa et al., 2019; Revita, Trioclarise, et al., 2017; Revita, Wekke, et al., 2017). Even when the utterances are produced by women. These women prefer speaking paradoxically (Revita, 2015b; Sabirova et al., 2019).

Minangkabau women often gather in many situations for certain purposes. For example, in the cooking process for the wedding party. These women In this group, conversations often occur that contain certain purposes which **are sometimes different from what is contained in the speech** that arises. In this case, the assessment from the point of view of the speech implicature is possible to clarify the communication process that occurs.

Synthesis and Research Gap

The literature suggests that studies concerning implicature dealt with the implied meaning in regular conversation. Given that it is not clear yet whether almost all participants are female in a specific situation, the use of implicature will also be distinctive. Minangkabau women often use paradoxical utterances but commonly for an educational reason (Dewi, 2019). For example, when educating their children to behave like what Minangkabau girls are supposed to, the Minangkabau women prefer to praise. It can be seen in the dialog below:

1) Mother A: *Iyo co itu. Anak perempuan memang rancak pulang malam.*

‘What a great attitude. A girl is supposed to go back home late at night.’

2) Mother B: *Rancak na karajo kau yo! Main se lah taruih. Jan pulang-pulang ka rumah!*

‘What great work! Keep playing outside the home. Even never go back home!’

Both utterances 1-2 began with praise. If it is related to the context, the daughter of these two mothers was busily playing outside the home. In Minangkabau culture, it is a kind of taboo that the girls go back home late at night. The girls have to be at home before dusk. However, the daughters disobeyed the rule. To remind, to show the desperate, and to educate, the speaker used paradoxical utterances. The paradoxical utterances are categorized as implicature since there is implied meaning behind the utterances.

As the conversation occurred in the kitchen, it is assumed that the intention in the implicature is directive, where request, command, and suggestion will be used more. Logically, in the activity of cooking, the participants talk much about the cooking process. Moreover, assertive is also often intended because participants belong to teamwork that they will inform and assert.

The research about implicature used by Minangkabau women in a specific situation, like the cooking process, is not available yet. It is worth noting that studies of implicature related to women interaction (Ebrahimi, 2019; Lulu, 2019).

Research Questions

This paper investigated Minangkabau women's implicature when they were interacting in the cooking process for the wedding party in Indonesia. It aimed to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is the intention of Minangkabau women's utterances when they interacted using implicature in the cooking process for the wedding party?
- 2) What are the factors influencing the use of implicature in the interaction?

Methods

Research Design

The research is conducted by descriptive qualitative approach. Descriptive research consists of analyzing activities on data through the form of elaborating data that has been collected (Beeching & Woodfield, 2015). The research method was managed by following several steps. They were (1) data collection, which was done by starting to collect data obtained

in 1st research area (Padang), 2nd (Solok), and 3rd (Tanah Datar); (2) data classification to identify and categorize the data based on the research questions; (3) data description, (4) presentation the result of analysis; and (5) withdrawal conclusion.

Participants

The data in this study were taken from the primary source, namely the data obtained directly from the subject of the research using the instruments that have been set (Azwar, 2009). This study's data amounted to 267 utterances, which were spoken by 137 Minangkabau women during their cooking process in 3 regencies in West Sumatera in Indonesia, six interviewers comprising three *Bundo Kanduang*, two intellectual people, one custom leader.

Procedure

The method used in this study includes the method of listening and proficiency. Aijimer & Ruhlemann (2015) declared the method of listening was used to listen to the use of language. The technique used in this method is a competent, free listening technique, where a researcher only acts as an observer or listener for the use of language by informants, note-taking, and recording techniques. Furthermore, a skilled method is a form of conversation in data retrieval. The techniques used, including the proficient techniques originally constituted conversations carried out between researchers and informants, were carried out in person or face-to-face, record techniques, and note-taking techniques. Sudaryanto (2015) divided the data collection method into two, observational and conversational method. The observational does not involve researchers in research, only as an angler of the data release. The conversational method is when the data collectors conversed with the informant.

The analysis was done using the concept of implicature proposed by Yule et al., (2010), the intention of the speakers by Searle (1968, 1979), and the factors underlying the use of implicature by Leech (2014) and Oktavianus & Revita (2013). That Minangkabau people have their rules of speaking (Revita et al., 2016), the theory related to *kato nan ampek* (Navies, 2017) was implemented. The data were translated since they were uttered in Minangkabau language. The results of the study were presented descriptively. Some figures and tables were used to clarify the finding and discussion. The occurrences of speakers' intention using the implicature and the factors underlying the implicature is counted by using the pattern:

The number of data/number of all data x 100%
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The procedure of the research is illustrated in the following figure 1.

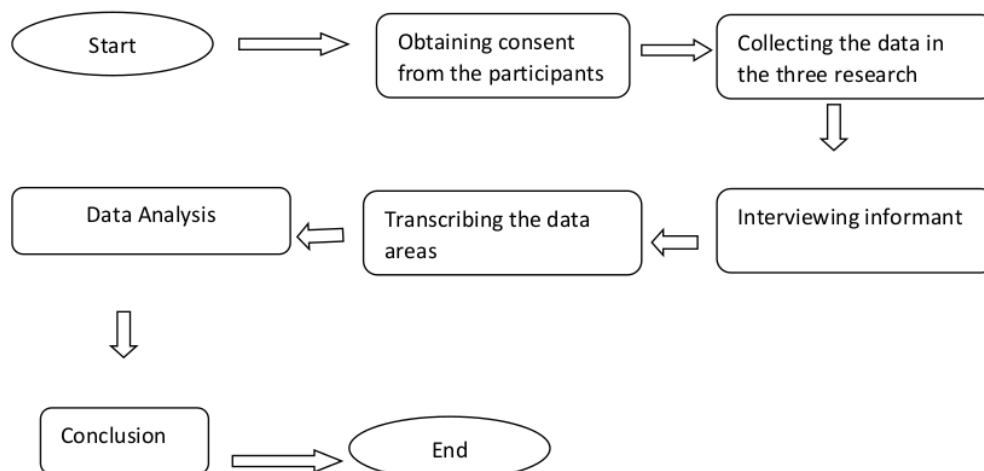


Figure 1. *Flowchart for Research Procedure*

Results and Discussion

Implicature and the intention of the speakers

This section provides the main result concerning the participants' utterances containing implied meaning. The intention behind the utterances is explained. Moreover, this section analyzes the factors of using implicature. The analysis is presented by stating the location (research area), event (each area consisted of three events and the events are numbered in order), and the speakers. Generally, there were eight meanings in the implicature used by Minangkabau women in the cooking process. These meanings are described in the following.

Location: Solok

Event 1

Speaker: 56 years old woman

1. *Bisuak rancak tangkuluak urang, ba baju rancak-rancak.*

'Tomorrow, many people will wear very beautiful scarves and pretty clothes'.

Intention: **Tomorrow will be lively and shiny.**

Literally, what the speaker uttered in data 1 informed that tomorrow is the wedding day where many people will have very beautiful scarves and pretty clothes. Most Minangkabau women wear veils. At the wedding party, the veil is not as usually worn, but a kind of traditional cover called *tangkuluak*. However, there is the implicature in this utterance, which means the next day will be more lively. It is supported by the explanation from *Bundo Kandung* (middle-aged women and very wise to whom people from her clan consult with). This *Bundo Kandung* clarified that at the wedding, Minangkabau women must wear traditional clothes that are very colorful and attractive. These women walk together carrying rice which is placed in a basket made of rattan covered with a colorful cloth made of velvet. The basket is put on the head. The women go hand in hand. It is very lively and shiny. It is also caused by the colorful traditional clothes of Minangkabau women.

Location: Padang Panjang

Event 4

Speaker: A 60 years old woman

2. *Yang gadih-gadiah nyo pai karajo, pai sakolah.*

‘The girls are working and studying at school.’

Intention: **The ones cooking in the cooking process are all only the old or married women.**

Those who get involved in the cooking process for the wedding party are married women, mostly the relatives of the house and the villagers. As there is a party, the neighborhood will directly go to help to cook. In the village, people often gather to help the party owner cook and have wedding preparations. It becomes the tradition of Minangkabau people to take part as part of community members. Married women commonly carry out this activity. Some heavy works like cutting the wood and bringing the heavy objects are done by the men. The wedding party is not held on Saturday or Sunday (holiday) but working days. When the speaker said *Yang gadih-gadiah nyo pai karajo, pai sakolah* did not mean to inform but there was implicit meaning existed. That cooking is only done by the old (married women) but not the young or the girls. It was depicted during the research that there were no girls taking part in the cooking process.

Location: Padang

Event 8

Speaker: 53 years old woman

3. *Payah wak duduak. Paruik boncik.*

‘It is hard for me to sit. My stomach is distended.’

Intention: **I cannot sit on a bench that is too low, and I need the high one.**

When cooking *rendang*, a woman kept standing. *Rendang* is traditional food of Minangkabau. It is made of small beef with coconut milk and various spices. *Rendang*’ color is black because it proceeded for a long time. *Rendang* must be stirred during the process. Otherwise, it will be burnt. While cooking *rendang*, this woman did not sit. When others offered her to sit, she replied by saying that she was distended. Literally, what the speaker said was not in line with what she meant. She did not tell to refuse but intended to change the bench with the slim woman sitting on the higher bench. Because many women come to the host’s house, the number of the bench is limited, and the party owners often make simple benches out of wood. The stool is small and short. People of normal body size can occupy the bench. The speaker did not directly ask for the higher bench but just informed her physical appearance. The implicature used by the speaker worked successfully because the slim woman gave the bench to the speaker.

Location: Padang Panjang

Event 5

Speaker: 69 years old woman

4. *Manggunjangan awak?*

‘Are you talking about me?’

Intention: **Feeling insulted and asked the hearers to stop gossiping**

The number of women with various backgrounds could cause misunderstanding. During the cooking process, the participants talked much. The topics are not only related to the wedding but also others, even politics. It is possible to gossip. It happened when a middle-aged woman asked two other women who were busily gossiping. These two women did not talk about the speakers. However, the speaker felt inconvenience because the two women had to stop speaking ill to other people in her understanding. The speaker was the oldest at that place.

Moreover, she was a respected person. The speaker's question did not mean to ask the information. She intended to remind the hearers not gossiping others. There was a process of reminding or educating the hearers whose ages were around 35 – 40.

Among 112 data, the speakers' intention when using implicature during the activity of the cooking process for the wedding party is presented in table 1.

Table 1. The Speakers' Intentions and the Occurrences

Speakers' Intention	Frequency	Percentage
Assertive	50	44,6 %
Directive	41	36,6%
Expressive	13	12%
Commissive	7	6%
Declaration	1	1%

Table 1 shows the overall frequency and the occurrence of speakers' intention in the use of implicature. Of the five kinds of speakers' intention, the highest percentage was assertive (44,6%), followed by the directive (36,6%), expressive (12%), commissive (6%), and declaration(1%). The result is a bit different from the assumption where the intention of the participants is most assertive. It is because the participants were those who are accustomed to cooking for the wedding party. Thus, they have already known what to do. The participants just informed what each of them was doing.

Declaration occurred only once in Padang Panjang when the wedding owner declared that her best friend would be the one to scoop out the side dishes. Once the side dishes are cooked in the cooking process, the scooper is usually a very respected woman or *Bundo Kanduang*. As a tribute, the presence of the wedding owner's best friend, a *Bundo Kanduang* but from a different clan and region, this wedding owner then used implicature for declaration.

Factors underlying the use of implicature

Several factors bring about the use of implicature. Leech (2014) and Oktavianus & Revita (2013) claimed that power, social distance, imposition rate, the speaker's character, and the norms of the society might influence the use of the implicature. These factors were used to identify the reasons for the speakers. Results are presented and discussed in reference to Table

2.

Table 2. Factors Underlying the Use of Implicature

Factors of Using Implicature	Frequency	Percentage
Social Distance	62	55%
Rate of Imposition	41	37%
The character of the speaker	9	8%

Leech (2013) claimed three factors, and Oktavianus and Revita (2013) declared four factors underlying a speaker's consideration to speak and choose the appropriate strategy in communication. In the cooking process for the wedding party, Minangkabau women rendered social distance (55%), rate of imposition (37%), and the character of the speaker (8%) for the judgment. The social distance became the most influential factor (62 times), followed by the rate of imposition (41 times) and the characters of the speaker (9 times). It is due to the participants in the event were from the various social background. Minangkabau people tend to speak carefully. The carefulness is reflected in Minangkabau proverb *mangango sabalum mancecek* 'Open the mouth before saying something.' It implies that a Minangkabaunese is supposed to think and rethink before speaking. They are not recommended to state spontaneously what in their mind is. This phenomenon is related to the use of implicature as the depiction of wisdom. A speaker will position himself in communication (Navies, 2017; Revita, Wekke, et al., 2017).

Moreover, a Minangkabau woman also considers the difficulties of others in fulfilling her requests. The implicature might become the strategy to save one's face (Alsulami, 2015; Dynel, 2015). Saving one's face is even being a habit when the speaker has the character of speaking carefully. She tries to avoid offending others by carefully choose the speech to use.

Pedagogical Implication

Implicature in cooking process under Minangkabau culture has performed values whose illocutionary forces appear in the speech acts defined by Searle (1969), and implies that politeness has been culturally inherent in the Minangkaubau cultural values. This study strongly devotes that pedagogically teaching implicature should serve the politeness and Minangkabau tradition will provide intercultural communicative competence in teaching a language. Conversation analysis to explore the cooking contexts where Minangkabau tradition applies variety of implicature needs more emphases in teaching pragmatic.

Conclusion

The current study investigated the implicature used by Indonesian (Minangkabau) women in communication at a particular event, namely the cooking process for the wedding party. There were five speakers' intentions when using the implicature: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration. The findings of this study revealed that Minangkabau women preferred implicature to assert others. It is due to three main factors: social distance, imposition rate, and the character of the speakers. The variously social backgrounds of the speaker and the philosophy encouraged Minangkabaunese to speak carefully. Implicature is one way to carry out carefulness in speaking. The study recommends the researchers run the research of implicature in their language and explore local wisdom. Moreover, the functions and the values of using implicature can be the next research to be carried out.

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