

ISSN: 2088-6799



PROCEEDINGS

International Seminar

LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT III

July 2–3, 2013

Revised Edition



Editors:
Jee Sun Nam
Agus Subiyanto
Nurhayati

**Master Program in Linguistics, Diponegoro University
in Collaboration with
Balai Bahasa Provinsi Jawa Tengah**

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SEMANTIC SHIFT ON MALAY WORDS IN CLASSICAL MALAY TEXT *HIKAYAT HANG TUAH* COMPARE TO MODERN MALAY (INDONESIAN LANGUAGE) AND THE RELATION TO CULTURAL CONTEXT

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Abstract

Language—like many other aspects of life—changes over time. All living languages will experience changes. The slightest indication of language change can be seen in older and younger generation. The earlier generation of language user might speak differently from the younger generation and vice versa. Because language contains form and meaning, the changes are not only limited to the form, but also to the meaning.

Indonesian language, as a living language, has its periodical changes and one of them is Classical Malay. Hikayat Hang Tuah is one of the most well-known classical Malay texts. Due to language change, there are some differences in Malay language written in Hikayat Hang Tuah and Modern Malay (Indonesian language). The differences can be seen clearly in the grammatical aspects such as affixes, word order, etc. In addition, the changes also cover semantic area. There are some words used in classical Malay which still exist today but the meanings probably shift.

Based on the previous explanation, it is intriguing to analyze the semantic shift in words written in Hikayat Hang Tuah compare to Indonesian Language. However, there are multi-factors triggering the change of language, including culture. Therefore, this paper will not only describe the semantic shift on Malay words in Hikayat Hang Tuah, but also the cultural context affecting the change.

Keywords: *semantic shift, Classical Malay, Hikayat Hang Tuah, Indonesian Language, culture*

1. Introduction

One of the natures of language is the inevitable change that occurs over period of time. The changes happen in language are the same as the changes occur in any other aspects in life such as culture, society, technology, fashion, and so forth (Aitchison, 2004; Keller, 2005). Thus, all living languages will always undergo changes. Those changes that occur in language include not only the structure of language (phonological, morphological, and syntactic unit) but also the meaning of the linguistic unit (Crowly, 1992; Campbell, 1998; Trask, 2010).

As a living language, Indonesian language (IND) is also the object of change. Seeing its historical development, IND can be divided into Old Malay, Classical Malay (CM), and Modern Malay (Teeuw, 1959). Additional period, namely pre-Modern Malay was added considering the transition period in 19th century. As the oldest period, the study of Old Malay language had been conducted by Collins (2008) which discussed many aspects of the language, including the semantic aspect that was influenced by Sanskrit language. The analysis of this period can be the evidence of language change. Similarly, the analysis of CM period can be the proof of language change as well. CM is the language used in CM texts and it is predicted to be influenced by the coming of Islam. This period produced many literary works and they are very important as data sources for language analyses in the field of diachronic linguistics.

CM texts are useful sources for diachronic linguists to study language change. The transliterations done by the philologist are valuable for the linguists to conduct the analyses (Sudjiman, 1994:99). *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (HHT) is one of the most well-known CM texts. Due to language change, there are some differences in Malay language (CM) written in HHT and IND. The differences can be seen clearly in the grammatical aspects, such as affixes, word order, etc. In addition, the changes also cover semantic area. There are some words used in CM which are still used today but the meanings shift.

Based on the previous explanation, therefore, it is intriguing to find out the historical development of IND, especially its semantic aspect, by analyzing CM text as the source of data and comparing it to IND nowadays. However, due to time and the length of paper, there are several limitations: 1) HHT used in this paper is the version of G.K Neimann (1906) published in Emeis (1952) and also the version of the text in Malay Concordance Project (MCP), 2) The possibility of dialectical influence is ignored, and 3) Malay words in this paper refer to all words written and found in the text.

2. Semantic Shift on Malay Words in *Hikayat Hang Tuah* And the Comparison to Indonesian Language

Semantic change is related to the change of concept embodied by the word (Campbell, 1998:255). For example, the word *sarjana* once meant wise people, but now this word means graduate of university (*Kumpulan Kolom Bahasa Kompas*). Campbell (1998:256—266) stated that semantic change can be classified into widening, narrowing, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, degeneration, elevation, hyperbole, and litotes.

HHT, itself, is a text written in CM Period and influenced by Javanese (Windstet, 1969). In addition, it is also notable as the only original romance in CM Literature. According to MCP, this text was written in 1700s. The analysis of the meaning shift of the words in HHT was conducted by checking the meaning in *A Dictionary of Malayan Language* written by William Marsden (1812) and notes provided in Emeis (1952). The meaning can also be known by observing the context of the words in HHT. The contemporary meaning in IND was checked based on daily use of the words because the researcher is the native speaker of IND.

Based on the change of meaning, there are some types of semantic shifts observed. These types are based on Campbell's classification (1998) and some classifications made regarding the findings. Nevertheless, there are no clear-cut boundaries among the types. They can be divided into:

1) Widening

In this type of semantic shift, the range of meaning of a word increases so that the word can be used in more contexts (Campbell, 1998:256). In HHT, the example found is *bendahara* which meant the treasurer of a kingdom (Emeis, 1952).

(1) *Maka iapun pergi mengadap bendahara berhambakan dirinya.*

Nowadays, the use of *bendahara* is widening since it might refer to treasurer of institutions or events as in the following sentence.

(2) *Dia diminta menjadi bendahara pada acara seminar yang akan diselenggarakan akhir tahun ini.*

2) Narrowing

Semantic shift of narrowing means the range of meaning is decreased so that the contexts of meaning become fewer than the previous meaning (Campbell, 1998:257). In HHT, the word with the narrowing of its meaning is *penghulu*. In CM period, *penghulu* meant a leader in a society as in sentence (4) and (5).

(3) *Maka penghulu Singapura pun datang seraya menyembah.*

(4) *Kami sekalian ini berpenghulu bendahara Paduka Raja.*

However, in IND, the word *penghulu* mostly refers to the head of office of religion affair or *Kantor Urusan Agama*. The example can be seen in the example below.

(5) *Mana penghulunya? Akad nikah sudah mau dimulai.*

3) Degeneration

Degeneration means the sense of the word becomes less positive and more negative in the minds of the users (Campbell, 1998:261). In HHT, the words with degeneration of meaning are *berahi* and *bini*. The word *berahi* meant 'to love, to be in love' (Marsden, 1812). The sentence below shows the example of the meaning of the word.

(6) *... karena duli yang dipertuan dahulu sangat berahi akan anak bendahara Seri Buana itu, yang bernama Tun Tedja.*

Comparing to IND, it can be seen that the meaning is different as in the example (8) below.

(7) *Nafsu berahinya muncul seketika saat itu juga.*

Similarly, the meaning of the word *bini* also degenerated. In CM, this word was used to mention the wife of the king as well.

(8) *Maka segala bini raja-raja dan bini segala menteri menghantarkan Raden Emas Ayu.*

In IND, this word is no longer appropriate to refer to the wife of the king or honourable people. Sentence (10a) sounds more negative than sentence (10).

(9) *Sri Sultan beserta istrinya menghadiri pembukaan pesta rakyat.*

(10a) *Sri Sultan beserta bininya menghadiri pembukaan pesta rakyat.*

4) Elevation

Semantic shift of elevation means the meaning gets more positive than the previous one. The word having elevation of meaning in HHT is *anugerah*. In HHT, the words *anugerah* were used 56 times and its context was not limited to gold or gift from God.

(10) *Maka Seri Betara pun memberi anugerah akan dia emas dan perak.*

(11) *... maka raja pun member anugerah akan Laksamana pakaian yang indah-indah.*

(12) *Maka Laksamanapun menjunjung anugerah berpuluh-puluh bendela kain.*

This meaning was elevated because in IND the use of *anugerah* is limited to the context of gift from God or special appreciation for important or inspirational people given by the leader of a country.

(13) *Dia diberi anugerah oleh Tuhan sebagai penulis yang hebat.*

5) Metaphor

Semantic shift of metaphor means there is a shift from the original meaning into the metaphorical expression formed by the word. For instance, there is *merantau* in HHT. According to Marsden (1812), *rantau* means 'a reach of river or flat sea-coast, especially at the mouth of the river'. Thus, the word *merantau* meant going down the flat sea-coast to look for fish for the living (Emeis, 1952).

(14) *...dapatlah kita ini berlima bersaudara melayarkan sebuah perahu lading, supaya kita pergi merantau mencari makan barang kemana?*

However, *merantau* in IND means the activity of moving to another city or country to work or study.

(15) *Ketiga anaknya merantau ke Kalimantan untuk bekerja.*

There is metaphorical use of the word *merantau* because the original meaning is used metaphorically in today's meaning in IND. It is no longer associated with the activity of going down the flat coast, but it is firmly associated with the concept of finding something for living and going outside of one's place are still the same.

Another word is *mengembari* is categorized in this semantic shift. It once meant 'to fight' (Emeis, 1952). Here are the examples.

(16) *Sungguhkah sahabatkau mengembari orang mengamuk dengan kapak tadi?*

(17) *Tatkala itu prajurit empat puluh itu mengamuk, tiada dapat tiada Laksamanalah yang bercakap mengembari dia, karena Laksamana orang berani.*

This word occurred 11 times in the text with this meaning. Nevertheless, the same word (*mengembari*) in IND has different meaning. In IND, it means 'want to be like'.

(18) *Tono mengembari penampilan adiknya.*

Both meanings (in CM and IND), though slightly different, still have the same root concepts: they are firmly related to the unwillingness to be defeated.

Furthermore, there are several types of semantic shift as described in the following table. Meaning (a) is the meaning in CM and meaning (b) is the meaning in IND. Due to the limitation of page, the examples cannot be given in this paper.

| No. | Types of semantic shift | Word | Meanings |
|-----|-------------------------------------|---------------|---|
| 6. | Semantic shift of different context | <i>Pecah</i> | (a) part of body (b) thing made of glass |
| 7. | Different perspective | <i>Dagang</i> | (a) the person (b) the activity |
| 8. | Loss of one meaning | <i>Duduk</i> | (a1) sit, (a2) live (b) sit |
| 9. | Resistance of the concept of thing | <i>piala</i> | (a) glass (b) goblet |

3. The Change(s) and The Cultural Context

The attempts to explain the cause of semantic change has been conducted by many scholars (Campbell, 1998:267). It is inevitable that the change of the language (also semantic change) is affected by the change of the culture (way of life, way of thinking, means of life, etc). For instance, 'pen' in the ancient time referred to 'feather' because it was made of 'feather' at the time. Now, 'pen' no longer referred to 'feather' because technology has changed. Similarly, culture also triggers semantic shift. Therefore, there are several points to consider about the culture of CM period.

First thing to consider is the fact in CM period the society lived in kingdoms, different from the condition today. There are many old written texts mentioning the kingdoms and the kings and they can serve as the evidence of the existence of kingdoms in ancient period. The oldest manuscript written in Malay, *Kitab Undang-Undang Tanjung Tanah*, also mentioned the name of king as explained by Kozok (2006). There were also many golden letters written by kings or *sultan* for the colonial government (Mu'jizah, 2009). Therefore, the word *bendahara* is related to the system of kingdom but it is unusual to refer to *bendahara* with kingdom. Now it is widened not only refer to kingdom, but also any institution or organization.

Second thing related to cultural aspect is the fact that the society lived in upstream and downstream. Emeis (1952) mentioned that Malay people lived around the river in which the downstream is the center while the upstream is the source of living. The word *penghulu*, then, can be assumed as related to this concept of living. Since they live in river (*hilir, hulu*), the leader of the society called as *penghulu*. This meaning is shifted due to the development of the concept of living and the coming of Islam. Though, it still needs further study.

This concept of living can also be associated with the word *merantau* because this word is derived from the word *rantau* which means 'flat sea-coast' (Marsden, 1812). The activity of going down the sea-coast developed into the activity of going to another city or country to seek a job.

Another point to consider is the change of value of particular thing. In CM, fabric was one of important thing. Thus, the words such as *kain, pakaian* (lexicon of clothes) can be categorized as 'chief interest of the people'. It can be seen based on many numbers of Malay texts telling about the giving of fabric and clothes. Furthermore, for the giving of fabric and clothes, the word *anugerah* is used, the same as in the giving of gold and silver. Thus, one could use *anugerah* to refer to the giving of fabric in CM texts, but it is weird to be used in IND. The following sentence is rarely read or heard.

(19) *Saya anugerahkan kain ini untuk kamu jahit.*

In HHT, the word *kain* occur 96 times and this word can be preceded by the word *anugerah* as in the following sentence.

(12) *Maka Laksamanapun menjunjung anugerah berpuluh-puluh bendela kain.*

Last but not least, the influence of loanword from 'high' (H) language is also considered as the triggering element in semantic shift. When there is a word for a concept from H language, it is then possible for people to use that word instead of the existing one. It is also possible for the existing word to be less used due to its lack of prestige compare to the word from the H language. This case happened to the word *bini* which was originated from Malay language. Its meaning was shifted into the less positive context and the similar word coming from Sanskrit *stri* (Jones, 2008), then, was considered more positive. Even in Malaysia, the word *bini* has less positive meaning (www.prpm.dbp.gov.my). It is widely agreed that something coming from foreign countries is considered as having more prestige rather than that originating from the local area.

4. Conclusion

Based on the explanation above, it is obvious that there are semantic shifts in CM words. The meanings are widened, narrowed, elevated, and so forth if they are compared to the meaning in IND. It is obvious that language changes, including the semantic aspect of the language. The changes were triggered by many factors, e.g. culture of the society. However, this study still has some shortcomings. There are still many words remain uncovered in this study. Further studies focusing on semantic shift with more number of words and more spaces for the analyses are needed so that there are clearer and more comprehensive description related to the topic. Furthermore, the attempts to explain the influence of cultural aspects must be conducted in a deeper way.

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