



Discourse Particles of Papuan Malay: *kapa* and *lagi*

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Abstract

This paper explores the meanings and the functions of the discourse particles *kapa* and *lagi* in Papuan Malay (PM). Both particles are used in various utterances or sentences of conversational-based short stories and/or jokes in PM published in the internet by different authors for Papuan and non-Papuan readers throughout Tanah Papua and beyond. The mainways for collecting, identifying and analyzing the data on both discourse particles are content analysis, semantic, and pragmatic methods. The results show that the particles *kapa* and *lagi* are not inflected. Both are not included as clitic particles and therefore they do not change their form regardless of where they occur in an utterance or a sentence. They are categorized as a final-ending type. Semantically, the discourse particle *kapa* does not carry any meaning at all when it stands alone whereas the particle *lagi* does. However, when they appear in a context, they can have one meaning in one context but another meaning in a different context. Pragmatically, both particles can convey more than one function, but, they cannot function as one-word answer to a question. They are functionally categorized as connective particle, illocutionary function particle, modal particle, evidential particle, and focus particle.

Key words: Papuan Malay, Tanah Papua, discourse particles, meaning, function, illocutionary function particle, modal particle, evidential particle, focus particle.

1. Introduction

Papuan Malay (PM) is a hybrid language used by its speakers in conversations and/or written exchanges in *Tanah Papua* (internationally-known as West Papua), located in the most eastern part of Indonesia (Morin, 2020). PM has been used as the main language of communication for centuries by “the people who have about 275 languages” (Eberhard et al., 2020). These people also use Indonesian language (IL) because it is the national language of Indonesia.

PM has a long history to form and to function as a language of communication among the Papuans today. In my article¹ I argue that there are five “exemplary authoritative figures” (Goebel, 2015a) who had and have already contributed to the production, reproduction, publication and dissemination of PM for centuries. *First*, the traders from nearby islands under the Ternate/Tidore Sultanate commenced their trading activities about the 8th century (Antoh, 2007). *Second*, the Protestant missionaries started their Christian mission (1855-1962) using Malay, Dutch, PM and local vernaculars in religious activities (Kamma, 1981) in the northern part of Tanah Papua. *Third*, the Dutch government introduced formal Malay through education and government institutions (1875-1962). *Fourth*, the Catholic missionaries introduced the formal written Malay through Bible in the southwestern part of Tanah Papua. From 1895-1962 Malay, Dutch, PM and local vernaculars were the languages of religious activities. *Fifth*, Indonesia occupied Tanah Papua in 1963 when the contact between Papuans and Indonesians occurred. Indonesian language (Bahasa Indonesia), politically, was also introduced through education and government institutions as a formal language in Tanah Papua.

¹<https://jlepnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/4.pdf>

Until now, PM has not been codified in order to meet the requirements to be a written language (Morin, 2018). However, the speakers make their own written system to write on notice boards, in leaflets, in advertisements, on banners, on street boards, and only a few words in the local newspapers including the massive use of written PM in some conversational-based short stories and/or jokes composed by different writers is in the internet (websites, bloggers, facebook, instagram, etc) (Morin, 2020). In my research on Discourse Particles of Papuan Malay that has been published in this journal (Volume 1, Issue 5, December 2020) indicates that PM has fourteen discourse particles and divided into three groups as shown in Table 1 of Section 2.

This paper only focuses on two of the fourteen discourse particles of PM: *kapa* and *lagi*. I show that both particles have their own meanings and functions based on which utterances or sentences they become part of.

2. Materials and Methods

Referring to the focus of this paper I present the results of my previous research in the form of table as noticed below.

Table 1 Three groups of discourse particles of PM and their position in utterances or sentences

Group 1 2 particles				Group 2 5 particles				Group 3 7 particles			
Particles and Position			Primary meaning	Particles and Position			Primary meaning	Particles and Position			Primary meaning
initial	medial	final		initial	medial	final		initial	medial	final	
		e				ka				baru	new
		o				kapa			dulu	dulu	first time
						mo		jadi		jadi	become
						se				lagi	again
						to				saja	only
									sampe	sampe	until
								suda		suda	already

Source: <https://jlepnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/4.pdf>

From this table I selected the discourse particles *kapa* in Group 2 and *lagi* in Group 3 as the focus of my discussion. I used the content analysis, semantic and pragmatic methods to identify, classify, and analyze the use of the particles *kapa* and *lagi* in utterances or sentences found in 10 short stories/jokes in PM. First, I read, identified, and classified the relevant utterances or sentences during the search. Then, I studied their primary and secondary meanings and also their functions in utterances or sentences in which they existed. Their meanings were, then, translated into English and Indonesian Language (IL). The results of this analysis are presented in Section 3 in a detailed discussion and followed by a conclusion in Section 4.

3. Results and Discussions

I will discuss the meanings and the functions of the discourse particles *kapa* and *lagi* while showing the utterances or sentences where they appear in.

3.1 Meanings and functions of discourse particles ‘*kapa*’ and ‘*lagi*’ in daily communicative practices.

I demonstrate that the discourse particles *kapa* and *lagi* have their own meanings and functions in utterances or sentences in which they appear. The 10 selected utterances or sentences as discussed below are presented in three languages: Papuan Malay (PM), Indonesian Language (IL) and English. There are some similarities and differences in word choices and meanings between PM and IL because “IL is the main lexifier for PM in the meantime” (Morin 2018).

3.1.1 The particle “*kapa*”

The particle *kapa* does not carry any meaning at all because it is not a word as it looks. But, I argue that as a discourse particle its meanings and functions are not separated from utterances or sentences produced by speakers in an everyday life context or a daily social practice. I show that this particle also has a fixed final position in every utterance or sentence in which it becomes part of. In this respect, it does not attach to any word which precedes it. In practice, the presence of the particle *kapa* functions as a question tag. The exact meaning of the particle *kapa* as a question tag is normally clear from the context when we read a text.

But, in speech, its meaning can be shown by intonation. In English, a rising intonation is produced if the tag is a real question, that is, if we really want to know something and are not sure the answer. Meanwhile, a falling intonation is articulated if the tag is not a real question, that is, if we are sure of the answer. Unlike English, PM only has a flat intonation to show either a person asks a real question (utterances 1 and 2) or a person poses a rhetoric question (utterances 3 and 4). This can be seen in the following utterances:

PM	IL
1) Ah, itu mungkin produk baru kapa? Argh, that's probably a new product, isn't it?	Waduh, itu mungkin produk baru, bukan?
2) Mungkin tadi ko sala bagi kapa? Probably, you divided mistakenly, didn't you?	Anda mungkin salah membaginya, bukan?
3) Ba, berarti <i>Faknik</i> [hantu laut] besar macam Tanah Papua kapa? Wow, it means <i>Faknik</i> 'the sea ghost' is as big as the Land of Papua, isn't it?	Wah, itu berarti <i>Faknik</i> besarnya seperti Tanah Papua, bukan?
4) Jang sampe Suanggi yang konto kapa? Probably, it's the Satan who farts, isn't it?	Kemungkinan, si Setan yang kentut, bukan?

In utterance 1 we notice that the speaker (one of the group members) uses the particle *kapa* to signal a question whether or not a bottle of alcoholic drink is a new product due to its unfamiliar taste after drinking a bit of it. Similarly, in utterance 2 the speaker (a friend who wants to help his two friends in their confusion) uses this particle to indicate a question because one person does not divide the fish into equal numbers with another person. Either the addressee in utterance 1 or the addressee in utterance 2 is expected to give a response to the question. Grammatically, if we notice closely we can say that they are probable interrogative utterances or sentences by the word *mungkin* 'probably'. Thus, the particle *kapa* functions as a question tag that requires an answer to these questions but it also emphasizes the question type of the utterances or sentences.

Meanwhile, both utterance 3 and utterance 4 the speakers pose rhetorical questions. The speaker (the son) in utterance 3 asks the addressee (the mother) about the size of the sea ghost by using the particle *kapa* to assert the point of similarity between the topic (the sea ghost) and the image (Land of Papua). He starts with a surprising expression *ba* 'wow' and followed by a simile utterance with hyperbolic sense. So, utterance 3 is in the form of question but it functions to communicate an emotive meaning that signals an assertion (representative). In utterance 4 the speaker (one of the persons in their gathering) uses the particle *kapa* to indicate a question without expecting an answer from the addressees. It is a cynical statement from the speaker because he assumes that nobody will honestly tell others that he/she is the one who soundlessly releases the smelly fart. In reality, we never know when and how a ghost farts. Accordingly, utterance 4 is in the form of question but it functions to communicate a controversial meaning that signals a challenge (directive).

All in all, the above utterances or sentences indicate that particle *kapa* only occurs at the end of an utterance or sentence as a tag question. It changes a declarative utterance or sentence into an interrogative one (utterances 1 – 4). The first two interrogative utterances or sentences are real questions that need real answers while the second ones are rhetorical questions that neither expect nor require answers from the addressees. Accordingly, the particle *kapa* is classified as illocutionary function particle, modal particle, and evidential particle for these utterances. The above utterances or sentences are from four different short stories in PM. They are the sites of linguistic representations of PM in which this particle is used by the story writers and reproduced by the bloggers and published them on the internet for Papuan and non-Papuan audience elsewhere in the virtual world. A detailed of meaning, function and category of this particle is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Meaning, Function and Category of Particle *kapa*

No	Meaning		Function	Category	Utterance or Sentence
	single particle	combined particle			
1	question tag (flattening intonation)		making real questions (yes-no, information) strengthening probable interrogative utterances or sentences	evidential particle, modal particles	1-2
2	question tag (flattening intonation)		making rhetorical questions (asserting and challenging)	illocutionary function particle, evidential particle	3-4

3.1.2 The particle “*lagi*”

I argue that particle *lagi* carries the meanings ‘again/anymore’, ‘please’, ‘also/too’/‘as well’, ‘so’ and ‘probably’ which can be seen in utterances 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 respectively. First, the appearance of the particle *lagi* in utterance 5 can be translated into English as ‘again/anymore’ in a conditional statement. The speaker (grandpa) warns the addressee (grandson) to stop doing his bad behavior. If he repeated it he would face some consequences. Second, it has the translation ‘please’ in utterance 6 because the speaker makes a polite request to reject questions from audience. Third, the particle *lagi* carries the meaning ‘also’ and/or

PM

- 5) Ko bikin satu kali **lagi** Tete bikin
ko jadi umpan buat ikan paus
Do it once **again** Grandpa [I’ll]
make you as a bait for whales.

IL

Kalau kamu mengulangnya sekali **lagi**
saya menjadikanmu sebagai umpan
untuk ikan Paus.

- 6) Kam jang tanya banyak **lagi**
Don’t ask [me] many [questions]
please!

Jangan kamu banyak bertanya **lagi**.

‘as well’. In this case, the speaker in utterance 7 tells the addressee that there is a man who is not only drunk; he is also beaten. Whereas, the speaker in utterance 8 confirms that even the easiest thing the addressee does not have any knowledge about it at all so the speaker strongly assumes that the difficult ones must be beyond the addressee’s knowledge. Fourth, the particle *lagi* has the meaning ‘so’ which has a similar meaning to

PM

- 7) De mabok baru dapa pukul **lagi**.
He was drunk and he was **also**
beaten.

IL

Dia mabuk dan **juga** mendapat pukulan.

- 8) Ko pasti lebi tra tau **lagi**
You absolutely don’t know it
as well.

Kamu pasti tidak mengetahuinya **juga**.

‘to that extent’ or ‘that much’ to emphasize a high degree of some quality. In utterance 9 the speaker (the father) asks the addressees (the kids) for not shouting joyfully because the neighbor will think that they want to show their arrogance. Lastly, the particle *lagi* has the meaning ‘probably’ because the speaker (the boyfriend) in utterance 10 talks to the addressee (the girlfriend) about his worries of being rejected by the girlfriend’s mother because of his unemployment condition.

PM

- 9) Nan kalo tetangga dong dengar

IL

Kalau tetangga mendengar teriakan

dong bilang tong sombong **lagi**.
If our neighbor will hear [your shout] they'll say we're **so** arrogant.

kalian mereka akan mengatakan bahwa kita **terlalu** menyombongkan diri

- 10) Nan ko pu mama tra mo **lagi**
Your mom will **probably** not accept me.

Nanti ibumu **mungkin** tidak menyukai saya

In short, these utterances or sentences of six short stories contain the particle *lagi* which has five meanings. In addition, it also conveys five functions which are used by the speakers with different purposes. First, they use it to indicate a warning in a conditional statement (utterances 5). Second, they use it to make a request (utterance 6). Third, they use it to indicate an addition to something already happened (utterances 7-8). Third, it is used when intensifying an adjective that precedes a condition described (utterance 9). Fourth, it is used to express a conjecture with an implied sense of doubt (utterance 10). This particle has four classifications such as connective particle (utterances 7-8), evidential particle (utterance 10), illocutionary function particle (utterance 6), and focus particle (utterances 5, 7-9). A detailed of description of meanings, functions and categories of the particle *lagi* is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Meaning, Function and Category of Particle *lagi*

No	Meaning		Function	Category	Utterance or Sentence
	single particle	combined particle			
1	again <i>or</i> anymore		indicating a warning in a conditional statement	focus particle	5
2	please		making a polite request	illocutionary function particle	6
3	also <i>or</i> as well		indicating an addition to something already happen or indicating that two different events happen to the same person or object	connective particle, focus particle	7-8
4	so		intensifying an adjective that precedes a condition described	focus particle	9
5	probably		expressing a conjecture with an implied sense of doubt or indicating probability	evidential particle	10

3.2 Classification of discourse particles *kapa* and *lagi*

The above discussion suggests that PM has met five out of the six categories of discourse particles as proposed by Goddard (2011:166) such connective particles, illocutionary function particles, modal particles, evidential particles and focus particles. Below is a brief description of each category and relevant utterances to support.

3.2.1 Connective particles.

The particle *lagi* is under this category because Goddard (2011) states that connective particles function as certain types of logical connection between propositions within an utterance or a sentence. In this sense, the particle *lagi* has the meanings 'also' (utterance 7) and 'as well' (utterance 8).

3.2.2 Illocutionary function particles.

Both discourse particle *kapa* and discourse particle *lagi* are categorized as illocutionary function particles. Goddard (2011) mentions that illocutionary function particles are analogous to questioning and exclamatory particles in utterances or sentences produced by interlocutors in a social practice. In this case, the particle *kapa* is the questioning particle.

Regarding the illocutionary function particles, Leech (1993) points out that there are four types of illocutionary acts functions such as competitive (ordering, asking, demanding and begging), convivial (offering, inviting, greeting, thanking and congratulating), collaborative (asserting, reporting, announcing and instructing) and conflictive (threatening, accusing and reprimanding). Three out of these four functions are applicable for the particles *kapa* (utterances 3 – 4) and *lagi* (utterance 6). In this case, collaborative, conflictive, and competitive are used to mark assertion (utterance 3), challenge (utterance 4), and request (utterance 6) respectively as embedded in these utterances or sentences.

Regarding the questioning particles (i.e., the question tag), the speakers in the utterances 3 – 4 use the particles *kapa* to modify the asking utterances into the asserting, challenging, and requesting utterances. Thus, these changes suggest that this particle bears the collaborative and conflictive functions.

3.2.3 Modal particles.

The particles *kapa* and *lagi* are under this category. In principle, modal particles are used to soften ‘what is being said (although they can also be used to make statement more forceful) and they can add extra emphasis’ (Weinert 2007). Or, we can say that the speaker use them to reflect his/her mood or attitude and highlight the focus of the utterance or the sentence. In addition, Johnson (1992) also states that modal particles can be used to mark hesitation of the speakers. In this respect, if we see utterances 1 and 2 it is obvious that the speakers use the particle *kapa* to strengthen these hesitation utterances or sentences because they convey the probable meaning. Meanwhile, in utterance 10 the particle *lagi* carries the meaning ‘probably’

3.2.4 Evidential particles.

In general, Ifantidou (2011) points out that ‘an utterance has an evidential function if and only if it overtly *communicates* evidential information, whether this information is linguistically encoded or pragmatically inferred’. In this sense, evidential particles are deemed important in a communicative exchange between interlocutors because they certify the speaker’s source of knowledge through the use of ‘know’, ‘think’ and ‘say’ (Goddard 2011). Besides, they ‘encode not only what a speaker knows or how he knows it; but also what an addressee can be taken to know, or *should* know, or apparently (perhaps culpably) *fails* to know’ (Haviland, 2011). The evidential particles *kapa* and *lagi* carry different meanings according to a context or a social context in which they become a part. The particle *kapa* does not have a literal meaning at all but it functions as a tag question and as an emphaser of probable interrogative utterances or sentences (utterances 1 – 2). Meanwhile, the particle *lagi* clearly carries the meaning ‘probably’ (utterance 10).

3.2.5 Focus particles.

Goddard (2011) points out that focus particles indicate how something figures in relation to other potential or real alternatives, either excluding them (like *only*, *merely*) or adding to them (like *also*, *too*, *even*). The particle *lagi* is under this category and it carries the meanings ‘again’ or ‘anymore’, ‘also’, ‘as well’ and ‘so’ (utterances 5, 7 – 9).

4. Conclusion

I have argued that semantically both particle *kapa* and particle *lagi* have more than one meaning when they are used in different contexts. I have also shown that pragmatically the particle *kapa* functions as a question tag and as an emphaser for a probable interrogative utterance or sentence. Then, the particle *lagi* indicates a warning in a conditional statement and an addition to something already happened. It is also used to intensify an adjective and to express a sense of doubt or probability.

The ten utterances or sentences above prove that both particles cannot function as one-word answer to a question. They are not inflected. They are not clitic particles and therefore their forms do not change regardless of where they exist in an utterance or a sentence. Structurally, they always position at the end of every utterance or sentence and therefore they are a dominated final-ending type.

After presenting the differences between PM and IL it can be concluded that, like other discourse particles, both particles have also gone through the processes of appropriation and revaluation for many years. Therefore, they already become an integral part of PM to serve as in-group markers for the speakers of PM (cf. Morin, 2020).

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