



The Functions of Language Analysis on Oral Tradition *Tangis* in Karonese

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ABSTRACT

This research deals with the analysis of language functions on oral tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese. The aim of this research is to: (a) describe how language functions are realized on oral tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese and (b) explain the reason why language functions are used on oral tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese. This research was conducted by using the descriptive qualitative method. The data of this research is taken from the utterances spoken by the pilgrims when did the *Tangis*. There are five language functions

found in *Tangis* from the six language functions proposed by Roman Jakobson. They were referential 54,1%, conative 32,4%, emotive 8,1%, phatic 2,7 %, and poetic 2,7%. Besides the language functions found, there are also the reasons the language functions are used on oral tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese. They were thoughts, feelings, needs, and observation

Keywords: *Karonese, Language Functions, Oral Tradition, Roman Jakobson, Tangis.*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a tool to communicate with each other. Humans as social use language in their life. "Language is often viewed as a vehicle of thought, a system of expression that mediates the transfer of thought from one person to another." (Finegan, 2008: 6). A language born from culture, to communicate. The culture own by a group, ethnicity, nation, and other regions that passed down from generation to generation. It can be oral, written, and sign or symbol. Between language and culture are connected to each other. As the combination of language and culture, for example, is the oral tradition.

Oral tradition is a custom that has existing for a long time, it is only done orally, and it is owned by ethnic which is passed down from generation to generation. Aside from being

a custom, oral tradition is also a recording device that explains the identity of society. Oral tradition will be very different in each region but there are also the same. The things that make it different are the meaning, the purpose, the language, etc. So every language, every culture, and every oral tradition is different. It depends on where the language, the culture, and the oral tradition is. For example, is *Tangis*.

Tangis is a part of Karo cultures. It is one of the processions of pilgrimage to the cemetery, saying what pilgrims feel to people who have died accompanied by crying. There is a feeling of satisfaction when doing it. Karonese believes that do the *Tangis* can communicate with the people who have died. The communication or the utterance contains a certain meaning and also a variety of language functions.

The language function is the role of the language system of communication (Sabata and Ibrahim, 2018: 110). According to Jakobson (1980: 81), there are six language functions, they are referential, emotive, conative, phatic, poetic, and metalingual. The language function determined by the factors of communication. There are six factors of communication, they are addresser, message, addressee, context, code, and contact (Jakobson, 1980: 82-86). When the language function is the role of the language system of communication, of course, there is also a reason why language function is used. In the theory of McKay et al., (2018: 37), there are four types of expression that are used in communication. They are observation, thoughts, feelings, and needs. These four types are used to express the language used and these types also are the reasons to use language functions.

Related to this research, the researcher takes the language function and oral tradition to become one study to analyze. The two of them is combining language and culture. Basically, similar research has existed before. It is written by Letlora et al., (2018) about the language function in *Kapata* oral tradition text on Saparua Island. The thing that distinguishes this study from previous research is the oral tradition used. *Kapata* oral tradition is folksong from Saparua Island, in the form of text. While this research uses the oral tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese. The oral tradition's *Tangis* is not in the form of text, *Tangis* will be different from one another. *Tangis* depends on what the pilgrims (speaker) feel, the feelings that they have will greatly impact the utterances they use in *Tangis*.

In conclusion, *Tangis* is still uncommon as a research object or maybe never researched before. That is the main reason that this research will do. Besides being a novelty, this research also reveals another side of *Tangis* that has never been analyzed before in

language function. Based on that, there are two problems that aim to find out the types of language functions used on oral tradition's Tangis in Karonese and to explain the reason why the language functions are used on oral tradition's Tangis in Karonese.

Functions of Language

The functions of language or language functions are generally the purpose of using language to communicate, convey ideas, feelings, thoughts, etc. Language functions also have a large enough area to be discussed in addition to the points above. Talking language functions, of course talking about the reasons for using the language itself. The researcher found that Jakobson's language functions are the most suitable for this research. There are six types of language functions based on Jakobson (1980: 82-86), namely:

Referential Function

According to Jakobson (1980: 82), the referential function is an orientation toward the "Context". It is denotative function and cognitive function, where denotative function and cognitive function are the main functions of many messages. The denotative function itself is the actual meaning based on the dictionary, interpret directly according to the dictionary. Meanwhile, the cognitive function is interpreting according to what is associated with the word or sentence.

Referential function corresponds to message factors and describes situations, objects or mental states. As said by Nord (2006: 48-49), the referential functions of a speech involves references to certain objects and phenomena. Referential function depends on a balance between the information provided and the estimates. To make the referential function work, the recipient must be able to match given message with the prior knowledge they have about the particular object in question. The example of a referential function is:

- 1) The sea is blue.
- 2) Our schools hours are 8 am - 5 pm, Monday through Friday.
- 3) Jamie goes to London on the earliest flight this morning.

So referential function is to provide information about situations, objects, mentalstates, etc.

Emotive Function

The emotive function is to express directly the attitude of the speaker to what is being discussed. According to Jakobson (1980: 82), emotive function focus on "Addresser" and tend to produce certain emotions. Emotive function usually occurs

when we want to express our emotions to someone even though they do not speak to provide information. The usual use of the emotive function is the presence of interjections (for example “Argh!”, “Ouch!”, “Wow!”, etc.) as well as the lengthening of vowels in certain words that express the emotions of the speaker (for example “I maaaaad to you for what you say about me”). Also the expression of emotional state (for example “Oh Wow! What a beautiful view”).

So emotive function is to convey the expression or the emotion of speaker or addresser.

Conative Function

According to Jakobson, the conative function is oriented to the “Addressee” (1980: 83). In the opinion of Newmark, the core of conative function is the addressee, in the sense of ‘calling upon’ the addressee to act, to think or to feel, to react in the way intended by the addresser (1988: 41). So, the conative function is to order or to ask the addressee, usually, the sentence used is vocative and imperative. For example:

- 1) I need you to complete this mission.
- 2) Do not go away from home!
- 3) Make your decision as best as you can.

Phatic Function

According to Jakobson (1980: 84), the phatic function is serving to establish, to prolong, or to discontinue the communication. This means the phatic function is used for interaction purposes and concerns to the channel of communication. Therefore it is associated with the “Contact” factor. Phatic function is one of the most common speech acts in everyday life. For example:

- 1) To establish communication:
 - a) To greet friend (hi, hello).
 - b) To greet strangers (hello) or more formally us (good morning/afternoon/evening).
- 2) To prolong communication:
 - a) To check whether the channel works (“Hello, do you hear me?”).
 - b) To attract the attention of the interlocutor or to confirm the continued attention (Are you listening?).
- 3) To discontinue communication:
 - a) Let us talk again soon.

b) That is enough for today.

Poetic Function

According to Jakobson, the poetic function focuses on the “Message” for its own sake (1980: 84). It is also known as aesthetic functions related to language as their main focus, namely the beauty of the language itself, the sound, and the texture that makes the word or sentence look or sound poetic. On the report of Newmark (1988: 42), the poetic function designed to please the sense, firstly through its actual or imagined sound and secondly through its metaphors. The rhythm, balance and contrasts of sentences, clauses and words also play their part. The sound effects consist of onomatopoeia, alliteration, assonance, rhyme, meter, intonation, and stress– some of them also play their part in the poetic function. For example:

- 1) I like Ike (rhyme).
- 2) Peter piper picked a peck of pickled pepper (alliteration).

So poetic function is used to make the message sounds poetic. The purpose is to make the message nicer. Then the other elements like poetic features also play their part in the poetic function.

Metalingual Function

According to Jakobson (1980: 86), metalingual function focuses on the “Code”. In another stated by Monaliu, the clearest expression of the metalingual function is the metalingual itself. They are currently present in ordinary conversation as a means of control on the use of the same linguistic code by the interlocutors (2017: 59). For example:

- 1) To comment or describe the language itself:
A sophomore is a second-year student (Jakobson, 1980: 87).
- 2) To clarify or to renegotiate:

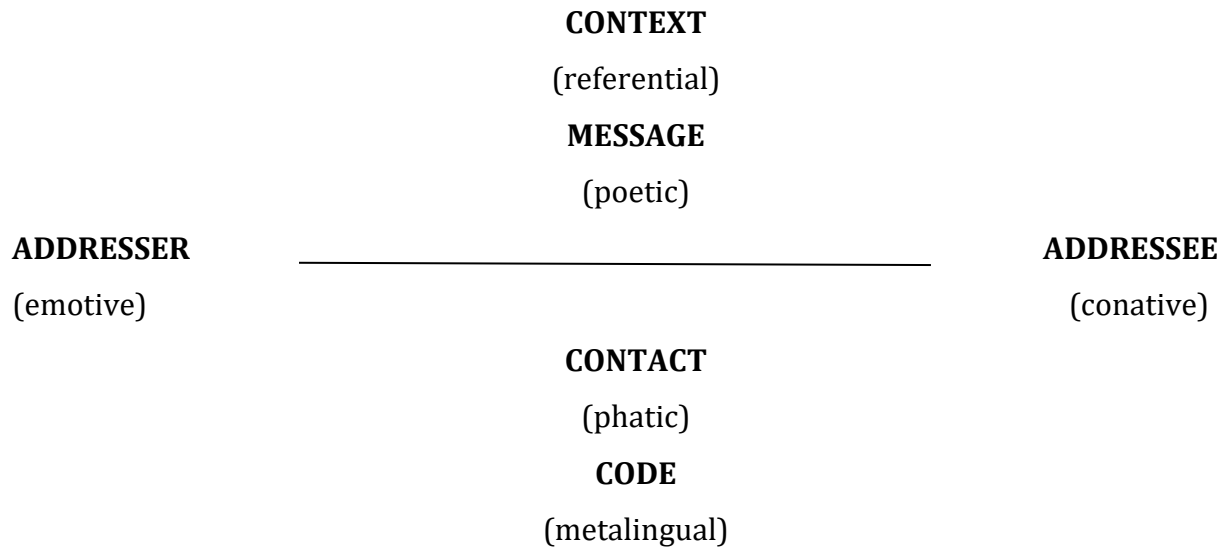
I do not follow you – What do you mean?

So metalingual function used to comment or to describe the language itself and to clarify or to renegotiate. This situation happens whenever the addresser or the addressee need to check whether they use the same code. Because it is important in communication to know the code (message) to avoid the misunderstood, the correction and the clarification is needed to avoid it.

In line with the types of the language functions above, then the language functions are realized with the factors of communication in it, since the language

functions determined by the factors of communication. The realization is in the form of the following schemes:

Figure 1. Language Functions and Factors of Communication, (Jakobson, 1980: 81)



The Reasons to Use Functions of Language

In communication, people have certain reasons to express the language they use. As said by McKay et al., (2018: 37), there are four types of expression that are used in communication. It is about expressing the thoughts and feelings to a very precious person, when something important is at stake, or when need to make a clear and complete statement about inner experience. So these are the types of expression according to McKay et al., (2018: 37):

Observation

Observation is an experience or a memory based on facts without any other elements such as feelings, needs, desires, etc. conveyed in utterances. The example is “I saw that there are four victims who were taken to the hospital this morning, one of them is my son”.

Thoughts

Thoughts are conclusions drawn from what has been heard, read, observed or based on experiences that have been passed. This conclusion is conveyed through the utterances. Conclusions are drawn based on the thoughts of the speakers about a matter. The result of these thoughts is called a conclusion. The example is “On this day people tend to buy some things that are not useful but satisfy for them”.

Feelings

Feelings are utterances that are conveyed by communicating emotions. The example is “I feel like I let my Mom down and it really gnaws at me”.

Needs

Needs is to express a desire, ask for help, and ask for support for what is needed in the form of utterances. The example is “I need some money to repair our home, so can we reduce the monthly expenses this month?”.

So, when communicating, the words that are used must express something. These expressions are observation, thoughts, feelings, and needs. One of those expressions is the reason someone communicates. In this case, is *Tangis*. Usually, pilgrims will express what they want to convey to the people who have died through *Tangis* with their choice of language. This is the reason they use the functions of language in *Tangis*. Because when talking about the functions of language, of course talking about the reasons for using the language itself.

METHOD

This research used the descriptive qualitative method and also used the discourse analysis approach since language function is a part of discourse analysis. The data of this research were the utterances of *Tangis*, delivered by the pilgrims while doing *Tangis*. The source of data was the pilgrims (the person who do the *Tangis*). In connection with this research that focuses on oral tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese, then the location of this research was in a village where the majority of the population still doing *Tangis*, namely Kutagugung, Karo District, North Sumatera Province. There are some steps conducted in analyzing the data in this research. First is identifying the language function using Jakobson's theory, the second is reducing the source of data which are not relevant, the third is classifying the language function using Jakobson's theory, the fourth is analyze the data into their types and explain the reasons touse language function on oral tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese, and the fifth is conclusion the result of the study.

RESULTS

The Types of Language Functions on Oral Tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese

After collecting the data, it was found that there were five types of language

functions that are found in *Tangis* from six language functions proposed by Roman Jakobson. They were referential, conative, emotive, phatic, and poetic. Each of these types yields a different amount. For more detail and to answer two problems in this study, they were explained below.

Table 1. The Percentage of Types of Language Functions in *Tangis*

No.	Functions of Language	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Referential	20	54,1%
2.	Conative	12	32,4%
3.	Emotive	3	8,1%
4.	Phatic	1	2,7%
5.	Poetic	1	2,7%
6.	Metalingual	0	0%
Total		37	100%

From the table above, it showed that there were 20 (54,1%) for referential, conative are 12 (32,4%), emotive are 3 (8,1%), phatic is 1 (2,7%), poetic is 1 (2,7%), and there is no for metalingual. So based on the table above, the most dominant of language functions in *Tangis* was referential.

DISCUSSIONS

Referential Function

Referential function is to provide information about situations, objects, mental states, etc. This is an example of a referential function that appear in *Tangis*, such as:

Datum 1

Nande, Nande, Nande Ribu, nandangin dung kuliahku e Nande nina Girikkempundu sintua Nande Ribu.

(Mother, Mother, Mother, your eldest granddaughter, Girik will be finishing her studies soon.)

The utterance above is a piece of utterances uttered by the pilgrim when visited the grave and she did the *Tangis*. Conveyed all the things that she wants to share with her mother through *Tangis*. It is about her daughter will finish her study soon. So she shared that information with her mother and her mother probably will be hearing that information. Girik

in the utterance is the pilgrim's daughter who will finish her study.

Based on the utterance above, the addresser is the pilgrim and the addressee is the pilgrim's mother who has passed away. In accordance with the context of the referential function, the utterance that is said to be referential is the information conveyed by the addresser to the addressee. So based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the pilgrim provided information to her mother about the pilgrim's daughter who will finish her study soon and it is called the referential function.

Conative Function

Conative function is to order or to ask the addressee, sometimes it can be vocative and imperative. This is an example of a conative function that appear in *Tangis*, such as:

Datum 8

"Urusndu sitik nakku."

("Please help your cousin.")

The pilgrim did the *Tangis* to convey the feeling that she felt in the parents' grave. In the utterance that was spoken, the pilgrim said that her daughter will finish her study soon. Until it reached datum 8, it is about the pilgrim asking her nephew to help her daughter in doing the research in *Kuta Gugung*, which is the hometown for herself and her family. The nephew of the pilgrim who lives in *Kuta Gugung* is believed to be able to help her daughter in doing the research.

The addresser from this datum is the pilgrim and the addressee is the pilgrim's nephew. The pilgrim asked her nephew to help her daughter, in taking care of the letters or the other things regarding research conducted in *Kuta Gugung*. The request conveyed by the addresser causes the addressee to take action on what the addresser requested. Request from the addresser to the addressee is called conative function.

Emotive Function

Emotive function is to convey the expression or the emotion of speaker or addresser. This is an example of an emotive function that appear in *Tangis*, such as:

Datum 3

Nande, mombang kuakap aku kundul rumahku e Nande.

(Mother, I feel something is incomplete in my home because you are not with me anymore.)

The pilgrim did the *Tangis* in her parents' grave, conveying the emotions that she felt to her mother through *Tangis*. In this datum, the pilgrim told to her mother that she feel something incomplete in her home and the reason is that her mother is not with her anymore. This datum illustrates the sadness felt by the pilgrim. This feeling can be seen in the word '*mombang*' which means 'incomplete', which is clarified by the other supporting words that explain the sadness of the pilgrim.

The addresser in this datum is the pilgrim who did the *Tangis* in her parents' grave, while the addressee is the pilgrim's mother who has passed away. In this datum, the pilgrim conveyed the emotions that she felt to her mother through *Tangis*. The emotion conveyed by the addresser to the addressee is referred to as the emotive function. In the emotions conveyed above, it is the sadness of the pilgrim or the addresser.

Phatic Function

Phatic function is serving to establish, to prolong, or to discontinue the communication. This is an example of a phatic function that appear in *Tangis*, such as:

Datum 30

E maka bagem Pinem

(That is all I can say, Grandmother)

The pilgrim visited her grandparents' grave, conveyed the messages, feelings or whatever it was to her deceased grandparents through the *Tangis*. At datum 30, the pilgrim ended the *Tangis*. In which datum 30 is the closing utterance of the *Tangis* that did by the pilgrim to her grandmother.

The addresser from the datum above is the pilgrim and the addressee is the pilgrim's grandmother who has died. Datum 30 shows that the utterance is a phatic function. Since the utterance in datum 30 is a closing utterance from the utterances before, in which the utterance means as a closing communication or to discontinue communication. In this context, the utterance is conveyed from the addresser (the pilgrim) to the addressee (the pilgrim's grandmother who has died).

Poetic Function

Poetic function is used to make the message sounds poetic and the other elements of poetic features also play their part in the poetic function. This is an example of a poetic

function that appear in *Tangis*, such as:

Datum 36

“Adi kena amak landasen bas kuta e,”

(“If you are the mat in our house,”)

A pilgrim visited the grave of her father-in-law and her mother-in-law. Conveyed the feelings, complaints, messages, etc. through *Tangis*. Based on datum 36, the pilgrim said what was on her mind about what her mother-in-law might want to say to her, that she is the foundation or host in their family hometown. Being the only family in her hometown, that is the reason why the utterance on datum 36 was uttered.

In datum 36, the addresser is the pilgrim and the addressee is the pilgrim’s mother-in-law. At the utterance above, the pilgrim said the word ‘*amak*’ which means ‘mat’ which is assumed to be the foundation or foothold in their hometown. It was said so because the pilgrim, along with her child and her husband is the only family left in their hometown, *Kuta Gugung*. So, they will be the foundation for other families from outside the village when they come to *Kuta Gugung*. The word ‘*amak*’ which means ‘mat’ is another meaning of the word ‘foundation’. This is a metaphor because the pilgrim described ‘*amak*’ which means ‘mat’ as if it was something else. Like “If you are the mat in our house” in fact the pilgrim could have said, “If you are the foundation in our house”. Since metaphor is an element of poetic and the message conveyed by the addresser to the addressee also aims to make the message looks more poetic, it can be said that datum 36 is a poetic function.

Reasons of Language Functions Are Used on Oral Tradition’s *Tangis* in Karonese

Tangis is one of the activities carried out when visiting the grave. This activity is in the form of conveying an expression of lamentation to people who have died. A kind of one way communication between the addresser to the addressee. In communication, people have certain reasons to express the language they use. There are four reasons language functions are used on oral tradition’s *Tangis* in Karonese, namely thoughts, feelings, needs, and observation.

Table 2. The Percentage of Reasons to Use Language Functions in *Tangis*

No.	Reasons to Use Language Functions in <i>Tangis</i>	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Thoughts	12	32,4%

2.	Feelings	10	27,1%
3.	Needs	9	24,3%
4.	Observation	6	16,2%
Total		37	100%

Thoughts

Thoughts are conclusions drawn from what has been heard, read, observed or based on experiences that have been passed. Based on the interviews conducted with three participants, it was found that there were 12 utterances that belonged to the type of thoughts. Each participant stated the reasons they used the language function that identified in every utterance they uttered when they do the *Tangis*. For the type of thoughts, it found four language functions, they are 8 for referential, 2 for conative, 1 for phatic and poetic. For example, in datum 6 as follows:

Datum 6

"Adijenda Bapaku ras Nandeku arih, enggome tengteng kerina banna adikempuna," bage ateku Bapa.

("If my Father and my Mother are here, it is certain that all of their granddaughter's affairs are in order," that is what I think in my mind.)

The utterance above belongs to the type of referential function, the first participant gave the reason that she used the referential function for the following reasons:

"These words were said because I wanted to tell my Mother what she might be able to do if she was still alive."

Based on the reasons above, it can be seen that the first participant used the referential function in *Tangis* because of thoughts. Thoughts are conclusions drawn from what has been experienced. So if the participant usually has difficulties, then there is a mother who wants to help to solve her problem, but now her mother is gone, no one else will help her as quickly as her mother used to do. Based on this explanation, it can be said that the reason for using the language function in datum 6 which is included in the type of referential function is "thoughts".

Feelings

Feelings are the utterances that are conveyed by communicating emotions. Based on the interviews conducted with three participants, it was found that there were 10 utterances that belonged to the type of feelings. Each participant stated the reasons they used the language function that identified in every utterance they uttered when they do the

Tangis. For the type of feelings, it found three language functions. They are 4 for referential, 3 for emotive and conative. For example, in datum 3 as follows:

Datum 3

Nande, mombang kuakap aku kundul rumahku e Nande.

(Mother, I feel something is incomplete in my home because you are not with me anymore.)

The utterance above belongs to the type of emotive function, the first participant gave the reason that she used the emotive function for the following reasons:

“The reason is I want to convey my emotions to my Mother.”

Based on the reasons above, it can be seen that the first participant used the emotive function in *Tangis* because of feelings. Feelings are the utterances that are conveyed by communicating emotions. So the first participant convey her emotionsto her Mother that she felt something was different when her mother was gone. Shedoes not know why but it feels like something is missing without her Mother. That is why the first participant express the feelings she experienced to her Mother through the *Tangis* she did. Based on this explanation, it can be said that the reasonfor using the language function in datum 3 which is included in the type of emotivefunction is "feelings".

Needs

Needs is to express a desire, ask for help, and ask for support for what is needed in the form of utterances. Based on the interviews conducted with three participants, it was found that there were 9 utterances that belonged to the type of needs. Each participant stated the reasons they used the language function that identified in every utterance they uttered when they do the *Tangis*. For the type of needs, it found two language functions. They are 7 for conative and 2 for referential. For example, in datum 8 as follows:

Datum 8

“Urusndu sitik nakku.”

(“Please help your cousin.”)

The utterance above belongs to the type of conative function, the first participant gave the reason that she used the conative function for the following reasons:

“The reason is that I asked Samuel to help his cousin to do the research here. So I

asked for Samuel's help."

Based on the reasons above, it can be seen that the first participant used the conative function in *Tangis* because of needs. Needs are the way to ask for help and ask for support for what is needed in the form of utterances. It is known that the first participant asked for help from her nephew who was in *Kuta Gugung* to help her daughter who was going to do research in *Kuta Gugung*. Based on this explanation, it can be said that the reason for using the language function in datum 8 which is included in the type of conative function is "needs".

Observation

Observation is an experience or a memory based on facts without any other elements such as feelings, needs, desire, etc. conveyed in utterances. Based on the interviews conducted with three participants, it was found that there were 6 utterances that belonged to the type of observation. Each participant stated the reasons they used the language function that identified in every utterance they uttered when they do the *Tangis*. For the type of observation, it found one language function. It is 6 for referential. For example, in datum 1 as follows:

Datum 1

Nande, Nande, Nande Ribu, nandangin dung kuliahku e Nande nina Girikkempundu sintua Nande Ribu.

(Mother, Mother, Mother, your eldest granddaughter, Girik will be finishing her studies soon.)

The utterance above belongs to the type of referential function, the first participant gave the reason that she used the referential function for the following reasons:

"It has become a tradition to do the *Tangis* when going to the grave. Remembering how she was life used to be, makes us touched. The expression that is in our hearts, we express it through *Tangis*. As the utterance you mentioned before, the reason is that I want to tell my Mother what happened, her granddaughter is about to finish college, so I really want to tell my Mother that her granddaughter is about to graduate."

Based on the reasons above, it can be seen that the first participant used the referential function in *Tangis* because of observation. Observation is an experience or a memory based on facts without any other elements. In this case, the first participant did the *Tangis* by conveying information to her Mother that her daughter would finish her study

soon. This information was obtained from her daughter who conveyed the same information to the first participant. That is what made the first participant do the *Tangis* over the memory of the information conveyed by the first participant's daughter. Based on this explanation, it can be said that the reason for using the language function in datum 1 which is included in the type of referential function is "observation".

From the explanation above, it can be seen that there are four reasons why language functions are used on oral tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese, namely:

- 1) Thoughts,
- 2) Feelings,
- 3) Needs,
- 4) Observation.

So talking about the functions of language, of course talking about the reasons for using the language itself.

CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the data and finding the results, conclusions are drawn as follows. There were five types of language functions found on oral tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese. As in referential function found 20 utterances, in conative function found 12 utterances, in emotive function found 3 utterances, in phatic function found 1, and poetic function found 1. There were four reasons language functions are used on oral tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese. It was found 12 for thoughts, 10 for feelings, 9 for needs, and 6 for observation.

Based on the conclusions above, the suggestions were as follow. It is suggested to all the people, especially the young generation from North Sumatera who have *Karo* tribe. It is hoped that they know *Tangis* as their culture and tradition, they understand the realization of language functions and the reasons to use language functions on *Tangis*. It is advised to the readers should increase their scientific knowledge about language function particularly the realization of language functions on oral tradition's *Tangis* in Karonese. It is recommended for further researchers to conduct other research related to language functions with a different side of *Tangis*. If this study was done on the people who have died, then other researchers might be able to do *Tangis* in a different context.

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