

Terms of Address in Expressing Politeness and Solidarity in Sangir Community Indonesia

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Abstract- This study looked at the issues involved in addressing people in this community. It attempts to describe firstly about the terms of address in expressing the politeness and solidarity. Secondly to describe the wider usage of terms of address found. To obtain the data, participant observation and interview were used. The participants did not realize that they were recorded while discussing something or speaking about something. After recording the spoken data, the interview was conducted in order to confirm the recorded data. The classification according to their meaning both in the family and outside the family has done. After the classification, the researcher made the conclusion based on the purpose of this study. Therefore, the finding shows that the original function of address terms *Akang, Ara, Ari, Hembo* in Sangir community is to symbolize the respect and politeness in the family domain. Whereas in the social domain outside the family, their meaning has spread to become as symbol of intimacy and solidarity.

Keywords: *Expression; Politeness; Solidarity; Sangir Community.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Address term is one of the most important elements in a communication between people in a society. The choice of term used in expressing someone tends to be governed by some factors. Wardhaugh argued that if we look at what is influenced in addressing another, it seems that a variety of social factors usually governs our choice of terms: the particular occasion; the social status or rank of the other; sex; age; family relationship; occupational hierarchy; transactional status; race or degree of intimacy. According to Wardhaugh, before we use a proper term of address, there must be some social factors being considered [1].

The rule how to address someone in a society is very complex specifically if we think about being polite. Holmes stated:contain social factors have been relevant in accounting for the particular variety used [2]. So relate to the users of language – the participant; other relate to its uses – the social setting and the function of interaction. Holmes said that the aim or purpose of the interaction may

also be important in deciding to choose a proper term of address.

One of the examples have been done about the term of address is the study conducted by Brown and Gilman related to the use of *Tu* and *Vous* (1960). They found that if *Tu* is used mutually, it describes that there is high intimacy occurred between the speakers. On the contrary, if *Vous* is used mutually, it shows the high grade of politeness, which means that the intimacy is low. The speakers are may be bound by the power in addressing each other.

Sangir people residing in Sangir-, Sitaro- and Talaud Region use Sangiric language. Sneddon (1994) claimed that this language belongs to Sangiric groups. In this community, the use of address terms is related closely with its culture. Almost all of the members of this community never call someone older with his/her first name (FN). They have special terms instead to show the politeness and solidarity. In addressing among them in a family, they have their own terms.

This study looked at the issues involved in addressing people in this community. It attempts to describe firstly about the terms of address in expressing the politeness and solidarity. Secondly to describe the wider usage of terms of address found

II. METHOD

To obtain the data, participant observation and interview were used. The participants did not realize that they were recorded while discussing something or speaking about something. After recording the spoken data, the interview was conducted in order to confirm the recorded data [3]. The classification according to their meaning both in the family and outside the family has done. After the classification, the researcher made the conclusion based on the purpose of this study.

III. RESULTS

Wardhaugh claimed “When we speak, we must constantly make choices of many different kinds: What we want to say, how we want to say it, and the specific sentence types, words, and sounds, that best unite the what with the how” [1]. This idea supports my finding involving the terms of address among Sangir people. The expression *Akang*, *Ara*, *Ari* and *Hembo* is used according to their function as symbol of politeness in the family domain. Outside the family, people use this term to express solidarity among people who have known each other well.

A. TERMS OF ADDRESS IN EXPRESSING THE POLITENESS

In addressing other, someone has to consider about some social factors, so that they will be considered polite. Holmes explained that politeness involves taking account of the feelings of others. A polite person tries to make others feel comfortable. Being linguistically polite involves speaking to people appropriately in the light of their relationship to us. Inappropriate linguistic choices may be considered rude [2].

Brown and Ford concluded that in addressing and naming someone can reveal some information. If title (T), LN and FN are used asymmetric, it can be indicated inequality in power. If T and LN are used mutually, can indicate inequality and unfamiliarity [4]. If it happens, that people switch from mutual TFL to FN is usually initiated by the most powerful member in the relationship.

The data show that in the Sangir community there are some terms found in addressing other to show the politeness. These terms must be used to express the respect specifically to older relatives in order not to be considered rude [5].

Terms *Akang*, *Ara*, *Ari* and *Hembo* appear inside the family domains as the symbol of politeness. In Sangir community there is a common rule in the society of not addressing someone with their first name. If it happens, they will be considered as impolite. This trend is employed through the every day life of Sangir people even if they are living outside the community. This study found that *Akang* refers to the first child of the family, *Ara* refers to the second child, *Ari* to the *third* and *Hembo* to the fourth or refers to the youngest. The usage of the terms is generally required in the family domain not only in the kern family but also in the extended family.

Example 1

- *Akang*, makangjo (Sist, please have dinner)
- Torang dua *Ara* so lebe dulu (We, *Ara* and I have got dinner some minutes ago)
- *Papa Hembo* deng *Oma Hembo* so pulang tadi siang (youngest uncle and youngest aunty have just gone this afternoon)

This dialogue is occurred between youngest brother and oldest sister. It begins with the expressions of the youngest

brother to his oldest sister. *Akang*, please have dinner. The younger calls his older sister *Akang* instead of her first name (FN). In the second expression *Ara* refers to the second child of the family. And the third expression refers to the extended family, where also the rule of addressing other applied. *Papa Hembo*, *Mama Hembo* refers to the youngest uncle and aunty both from father side and from mother side.

The children in the family have strictly ordered not to call their older brother or sister with their first name (FN). They have to address them with the mentioned terms above according to their functions. If they call their older brother or sister with the FN, the parents will be angry to them and say that “It is impolite” or the children will be considered as rude person.

During the conversation among brother or sister they have to apply this rule specifically if their role in the conversation is as the first and the second person singular. If the person has the role as the third person singular, it does not matter if they call them with *Akang* + FN/*Ara* + FN/*Ari* + FN/or *Hembo* + FN, because they do not speak directly with them. They are in this situation only as the object of a conversation. We can argue that in addressing people in the family, Sangir people show the respect and the politeness between brother and sister. It appears that power influences this tendency. Older brother or older sister is often allowed to call the younger with their FN but not the contrary. Asymmetric use of names and address terms indicate of a power differential.

In the context of extended family, this rule is also applied to address uncle, aunty, grandmother, and grandfather specifically when family ties are extremely strong, that is likely to the preference. The formula is *papa/mama/opa/oma* + *akang*, *papa/mama/opa/oma* + *ara*, *papa/mama/opa/oma* + *ari*, dan *papa/mama/opa/oma* + *Hembo*. From this finding, it can be said that the younger shows the respect and the politeness to the older very much. By applying this rule, almost all the member of the family are able to know exactly the position of uncle, aunty, grandma and grandpa in the extended family. They know without hesitation who the eldest, the second, the third and the youngest aunty/uncle in the big families. This tendency shows us how close the relationship among the kern and the extended family in the Sangir community. However, it can be seen that the asymmetric use of first name (FN) in the extended family means there happens power differential.

B. TERMS OF ADDRESS IN EXPRESSING THE SOLIDARITY

The study of Brown and Gilman reveals the variety use of *Tu* and *Vous*, which indicate about the power and solidarity. They made distinction of Singular *Tu* and plural *Vous*. To express the solidarity, they found that people used symmetrical *Tu*. This can indicate that the grade of intimacy is high. People, who used symmetrical *Tu* tend to have strong common interests, which show solidarity. On the

other hand, there are situation of using *Tu* and *Vous*, where upper classes used *Tu* to address lower classes, but lower classes address them by using *Vous*. This situation shows the asymmetrical use of *Tu* and *Vous*, which symbolize a power relationship.

In Sangir community, this situation appears among family members, where the older brother or sister can call their younger or little sister with their first name. The younger are however not allowed to apply it. They must follow the rule, which based on their own culture meaning to use the specific terms mentioned above.

Recently, the terms of address *Akang*, *Ara*, *ari*, and *Hembo* have a wider meaning related to their function in the social relationship. The original meaning as the symbol of respect and politeness in the family spreads wider to become as symbol of solidarity. These terms are used among the Sangirese, who have close/strong relationship meaning that they have known each other very well.

Example 2

- Akang Mien, dating kapan dari Sanger? (*Akang Mien*, when did you arrive from Sangir?)
- Kemarin, Ari. Napa kencang skali sampe Hembo Ita mabo di kapal (Yesterday, *Ari*. The weather was not good, that is why *Hembo* felt not so well)
- Ara Taty da datang le? (Did *AraTaty* come?)

The above expression happens between two neighbours, who did not meet each other for 2 weeks. They use *Akang*, *Hembo* and *Ara* in this situation to express the solidarity. They live in the same place, come from the same ethnic, and have the same interests. They mostly use this address terms with the combination of First name (*Akang/Embo/Ara + Marry*). In the reality, the first person is older than the second person meaning that they do not use the term of address as its original function. They use it in order to avoid the use of first name (FN).

They employ this terms to express the solidarity rather than the politeness. They call *Akang*, *Ara*, *Ari* or *Hembo* because they tend to not call them with their FN. In other words, they tend to replace the FN with these terms. It can be noted that their choice of using the address terms is influenced by their intimacy grade meaning how well they have known each other.

IV. CONCLUSION

The finding shows that the original function of address terms *Akang*, *Ara*, *Ari*, *Hembo* in Sangir community is to symbolize the respect and politeness in the family domain. Whereas in the social domain outside the family, their meaning has spread to become as symbol of intimacy and solidarity.

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