

Study on the Pragmatic Function of Kinship Appellation in Uyghur Language

Parezhati Maisuti^{1,*}

Northwest Minzu University, Lanzhou, Gansu, China

*Corresponding author. Email: 2178783717@qq.com

ABSTRACT

By use of theory of linguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics and other discipline knowledge, this paper gives the detailed description and comprehensive analysis for Uyghur kinship appellations. At the same time it not only summarizes some main principles of using kinship appellations but also discusses the pragmatic characteristics of Uyghur kinship appellations used in social communication. This paper is of certain significance to promote the further study of Uyghur kinship terms and enrich the research results of address terms.

Keywords: kinship appellation, principles of using, pragmatic characteristics

I. INTRODUCTION

The encyclopedia of China defines kinship as "social relations resulting from marriage, blood relationship and adoption, with legal rights and obligations to each other"¹. The Modern Chinese Dictionary gives the such definition that "a person who is related by blood or marriage"². Salutation is a way of addressing others. Kinship appellation is the way to address one's family members and relatives.

Sociolinguists believe that choosing the appropriate appellation form is good for determining each other's social status and express different interpersonal relationships. Appellation, as a special language symbol, not only has referential function, but also reflects the relationship between two parties in communication. Kinship terms, as one of the important parts of appellation, also reflects the close relationship between communication parties. The number of kinship terms in Uyghur language is not large, and there are no kinship terms corresponding to the reference for various kinship relations. The most prominent feature of Uyghur kinship terms is generality and conciseness. It is general for the following two reasons: first, the number of kinship terms is small, and some of the kinship does not correspond to the kinship appellation; second, the same

kinship terms express different relationship between relatives in different places. It is simple because different kinships are expressed using the same kinship terms. For example: when the kinship term "bowa" (grandfather) is used, it refers to both grandpa and maternal grandfather. There are no different terms for paternal and maternal relatives as in Chinese. 爷爷 (yeye) is grandpa, 外公 (waigong) is maternal grandpa in Chinese. So, it can be considered simple.

The function of Uyghur kinship terms is embodied in two kinds of usage: the first one is kinship appellations used between the relatives, the second one between non-relatives in the society. So this kind of appellations can be described from these two usages.

II. FUNCTIONS OF KINSHIP TERMS USED BETWEEN KIN MEMBERS

A. Kinship terms reflect a variety of kinship relationships

Kinship terms reflect various kinship relationships among relatives. Both social appellation and kinship appellation reflect the relationship between people. Social appellations reflect social relations, such as relation between teacher and student, employer and employee and so on. Kinship appellations reflect all kind of kinship relations. For example: kinship appellation ər-ajal reflect the relationships between husband and wife. kinship appellation ata-bala reflects the relationship between father and daughter or son. Reflecting some kind of relationships is the most basic features of kinship terms.

*Project: Central University project; phased achievements of "social and cultural studies of Uyghur kinship appellations" (Project No.: 31920150136); Talent introduction program; the phased achievement of "Meaning and Usage of the Uyghur Restricted Tone Auxiliary words - La" (Project number: Z16006).

¹ Hu Shiyun. A study on Kinship appellation in Chinese. Beijing: Commercial Press, 2007, p 1.

² A dictionary of Modern Chinese (5th Ed.), the Commercial Press, 2005, p1025.

B. *Kinship terms reflect a person's status to the other family members*

Kinship appellation is a kind of distinguishing mark, that is to say, it can distinguish that one kind of kinship is different from another one. Kinship appellation has distinguishing characteristics, such as being able to distinguish between men and women, old and young, close and distant, etc. The most basic function of kinship terms is to clearly reflect a person's status in the family relative to other relatives. After we have determined a person's place in the family, other relatives in the family may call him or her according to that position. So, you can't communicate between relatives without a kinship appellation. In general, kinship terms can help both parties in communication to position their roles and also help the communicator mediate the interpersonal relationship. It makes our conversation more successful.

III. FUNCTIONS OF KINSHIP TERMS USED IN SOCIETY

A. *Kinship terms can strengthen existing relationships when used in society*

Kinship terms are used socially to address people who are more familiar and to reinforce existing relationships. Also, they can narrow the psychological distance between the two sides. In discourse communication, kinship terms are used to seek a conversation topic, change or maintain the original topic. In addition, communicative code switching can also be achieved according to the communicative situation and role relationship.

B. *Kinship terms can build (new) relationships*

When kinship terms are used to address strangers, they can make the original estranged relationship closer, and the other side feel respected and closer. It can also shorten the psychological distance between the two sides. It creates a more intimate context. This context is essential to the successful completion of a conversation. However, when addressing non-relative members with kinship terms, it is very important to make clear whether the addressee is male or female, older or younger than ourselves, and then we can choose the correct kinship terms according to their age and gender. It makes other side more comfortable.

The gender and age of the other person are used to determine what kind of kinship terms to use when addressing a non-relative member. If a women older than themselves can be called *ača*, (elder sister) *hädä*, (elder sister), *čoŋ apa*, *čoŋ ana*, (aunt), if a women younger than themselves can be called *ukam*, *siŋlim* (younger sister), if a man older than themselves can be called *aka*, (elder brother), *taya*, (uncle), *čoŋ ata*, (uncle, the person same age with our father), *čoŋ dada* (uncle,

the person same age with our mother), when Uyghur kinship terms used in the community, it has strong generality. Kinship terms used to address kin members or used in the community can strengthen mutual relations. It plays a very important role in communicating emotions. Therefore, Appellation is an indispensable part in the process of interpersonal communication.

IV. THE PRINCIPLE OF USING KINSHIP TERMS

In the process of using, Uyghur kinship terms are not as simple as explained in the Uyghur detailed dictionary. The usage of kinship terms is very flexible in actual language communication. Why is it so flexible and dynamic? Because It is a linguistic phenomenon in Uyghur language that address the non-relatives with kinship terms. In such conversation, you should pay more attention to your relationship with your partner, their age, gender and other main information. Linguistics emphasizes that people's language behavior must abide by the cooperative principle and the politeness principle, and address terms, as an important part of communication, naturally abide by these two principles.³ No matter what kind of kinship terms you use to address a person, you can't just use them casually. Specially, when you address the non-relative members with kinship terms.

The main principles of the using of kinship terms in Uyghur language are as follows:

A. *Politeness principle*

When we address other people, we should address with polite way. If we address someone elder than ourselves with their name, they will be angry, because in Uyghur language, people cannot directly address their elders by their names as in western countries, and appropriate addressing terms should be used instead. Kinship terms can only be used if the rules of politeness are observed, whether they are used among relatives or in the society. Older than their relatives are called *aka*, (elder brother) *taya*, (uncle), *ača*, (elder sister), *hamma* (aunt), *čoŋ dada*, (uncle, the person same age with our father), *čoŋ ana* (aunt, the person same age with our mother) according to their gender. Some distant relatives, such as *Bir näwrä aka* (cousin) (male), *Bir näwrä ača* (cousin (female) can be called directly in the words of *aka* and *ača* without modification word before the kinship term.

B. *Age and gender principles*

When using Uyghur kinship terms, we must choose the proper kinship terms according to the age and

³ Zhang Liping; A Sociolinguistic study of gender differences in appellate terms, Ph.D. Dissertation, Minzu University of China, P. 22.

gender of the communication partner. Using the kinship terms that match the person's age and gender is a sign of respect for the person they are communicating with. To call a man older than ourselves, we can use these kinship terms aka, (elder brother), taya, (uncle), çoŋ dada., (uncle, the person same age with our father). To call a man younger than ourselves; we can use these kinship terms ukam, inim, (younger sister). To call a woman older than ourselves; we can use ača, hädä, (elder sister) or hamma, (aunt), çoŋ apa, (aunt or the woman who is the same age with our mother). To call a woman younger than ourselves, people can use these kinship terms ukam, siŋlim. (it means my younger sister; the structure of this word is root word uka, siŋil and the "m", "im" after root word are suffixes of the first person singular).

Age rule is a major feature of Uyghur kinship appellation by addressing non-relative members according to age level. There is no such custom among the peoples in the Western countries.

Out of the above principles of using, Uyghur language also has a special use of terms. It is some of the love and other positive emotional suffixes attached to the general kinship appellation case. Such as; apaš, ataš, dadaš, ačaš, akaš, ukaš. The structure of these kind of kinship terms is that Kinship terms + š (positive emotional suffixes) just like nickname in English. It is a form of endearment. The form of endearment also exists in dialects. Such as aylaš, (elder sister in turpan dialect) hädäš, (elder sister in Ili dialect), ükäš (younger sister and younger brother in Turpan dialect).

As mentioned above, the Uyghur language has some characteristic suffixes, which are attached to general kinship terms to express feelings such as affection. when using this kind of kinship terms. It is necessary to pay attention to the comprehensive situation of oneself and the other partner in the presence or absence of the person addressed when speaking to a younger child, and introduce the elder person to the child using this form of endearment.

V. CONCLUSION

Every language in the world has its own address system. Address terms, as an important part of human verbal communication, can reflect the social status, affinity and cultural customs of a language group to a large extent.⁴ Kinship terms, as one of the main parts of the appellation system, will also have the above functions. Appellations can be used to refer to one or more people before they enter into a relationship. In specific communicative activities, it can be used to refer to the receiver and establish communicative

connections. It can show the relationship, emotion and identity of the two sides of communication. Kinship appellations can indicate politeness attitude and politeness strategies. In discourse communication, kinship terms are used to seek the conversation topic, rotate or maintain the original topic, and compete for the turn to talk.

As a way to feedback the information in the conversation, it can also achieve the code-switching according to the communicative situation and role relationship. In conclusion, this paper discusses the pragmatic characteristics of kinship terms in Uyghur language and their role in social communication.

References

- [1] Mohammad Hossein Keshavarz Forms of Address in Post-Revolutionary Iranian Persian: A Sociolinguistic Analysis, *Language in Society*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Dec., 1988), PP. 565-575. Cambridge University Press.
- [2] Friederke Braun, *Terms of Address Problems and patterns and usages in various languages and culture*, New York, 1988.
- [3] Liang Jia. Pragmatic Study of Address [Y], *Journal of Hunan University*; Social Sciences edition, 2002 (3).
- [4] Ma Ying, Pragmatic Functions of Pseudo-Kinship Terms and Their Gains and Losses in Translation, *Journal of Anhui University of Science and Technology (Social Science edition)*, June 2003, Vol. 5, No. 2.
- [5] Zhao Yingling, On the Social Indicator Function of Address Forms, *Journal of Northeast Normal University*, 1st issue, 1997.
- [6] Jiang Zibao, Externalization of Kinship Terms and Its Usage Rules, *Language Research*, 2005 (10).
- [7] R.A. Hudson. *Sociolinguistics [M]*. Beijing foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, June 2000.

⁴ R.A. Hudson. *Sociolinguistics [M]*. Beijing foreign language teaching and research press, June 2000, p. 70-80.