



An Analysis of Politeness Strategies and Pedagogical Values of *Selabar* in Marriage Procession of Sasak Culture

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Abstract. *Selabar* is the second process after the tradition of ‘kidnapping’ in a series of the *merariq* (marriage) cultures in Lombok. This tradition is the process of informing the bride’s family that someone has decided to marry her. This process initializes a range of marriage rituals among the traditional Sasak tribe until these two people are traditionally acknowledged as a new family. This research, designed to apply an ethnographic approach, is aimed at analyzing politeness strategies and pedagogical values of the *Selabar* procession among the Sasak community. Data were collected using field notes, direct observation of the *Selabar* procession, and interviews with Sasak community leaders and analyzed using Brown and Levinson’s politeness model and the politeness strategy. The findings showed that both families in the *Selabar* ritual used the negative politeness strategy and positive politeness strategy. Meanwhile, the educational values in this ritual included innate value and acquired value. Innate values were honesty, forgiveness, thankfulness, and responsibility while the acquired value was communication values. The value of honesty was honesty appearing when a delegate from the groom’s side informed the bride’s family about the kidnapping. The value of forgiveness was seen when the bride’s family forgave the groom’s family about the kidnapping. The value of thankfulness was proved when the Sasak community leader (bride’s side) thanked the Sasak community leader (groom’s side). The value of responsibility was the actions and responsibilities of the two families to immediately hold a wedding. Meanwhile, the acquired value was the communication value. It was evident in the language used by the party involved during the communication or interaction. Politeness strategy and Pedagogical values of *selabar* were manifest during conversations between the representatives of the prospective groom’s and the bride’s family.

Keywords: Politeness · Pedagogical Value · *Selabar* procession

1 Introduction

A marriage procession can be different from culture to culture and may have its characteristic and socio-cultural values in an ethnic group, including in Indonesia. Among those ethnic groups having a unique marriage, the procession is Sasak, a tribe that lives

on the island of Lombok. The way of getting married is commonly known as *Merariq*. Marriage customs in Sasak culture have been classified into five different types: *Merariq* (kidnapping a woman), *Memagel* (kidnaping during the daylight), *Ngelakoq* (asking for permission from the girl's parents), *Nyerah Hukum* (given law representative), and *Kawin Gantung/tadong* (engaged) [1]. Most people of Lombok carried out marriages by *Merariq* especially people in areas where the majority of the natives are Sasak. Hilman and Hamdi argue that *Merariq* is the most popular marriage tradition in the Sasak community [2]. This tradition is still often carried out by the majority of the Sasak community, especially in the Sade village area [3]. *Merariq* has several rituals such as Kidnaping, *Selabar*, Sorong Serah, and *Nyongkolan*. Those rituals have their procession and this research focused on investigating *Selabar* rituals.

Some previous studies investigated the procession of *Sasak* marriage. For example, Athar investigated the issue of this marriage in the matter of *Sorong Serah* discussing how the language was used during the ritual [4]. Additionally, Hamsun and Aminullah investigated the marriage tradition of the *Sasak* community in terms of cultural communication perspective, focusing on the process of 'kidnapping' a girl as the first stage of marriage procession [5]. This study centers around the next stage of the procession, the *selabar* ritual, from the perspectives of politeness strategies and pedagogical values.

Selabar is the second stage in the Sasak marriage procession. This ritual takes place after a girl is traditionally 'kidnaped'. *Selabar* is the process of informing the woman's family that their daughter is already married [6]. This *selabar* has to be conducted by four people as representatives of the prospective husband. Additionally, this informing ritual should be conducted 3 days after the kidnapping at the latest.

Generally, politeness consists of expressions or feelings related to the 'polite' term. Brown and Levinson [7] defined politeness as an emotional and social sense of self in social interaction. They also define politeness as showing concern for people's faces. Sometimes we need to consider the social context when we are trying to interact with others. This theory illustrates the word 'face' based on the speaker's intention. There are two types of 'face'; Positive face and Negative face. A positive face is closely related to respect or honor. It refers to how to produce the desire to be liked or accepted by others. The negative face is independence or privacy. The intention of this face is freedom of action and not to be imposed by others.

Regarding how the theory of politeness is applied, Brown and Levinson define a face-threatening act (FTA) as a face or intention which possibly damages or threatens another person's reputation. There are four strategies for using FTA: bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record. Bald on Record is the intention that may be embarrassing or a little uncomfortable for the hearer. Commonly, this strategy is used when a speaker interacts with a close friend and family. This strategy is also used in a good relationship with the hearer. Positive politeness is the intention that refers to a positive face. Negative face is, on the other hand, the intention that refers to negative face whereas Off Record is a strategy that intends to escape from all kinds of imposition. Other than this aim, this strategy is usually expressed more sarcastically.

From a pedagogical perspective, *Selabar* is interesting to be investigated from linguistic and cultural aspects. The language that is used during the procession is different from the language used in daily or casual conversation. The language used should be of

the higher level, or what is known as *base alus* or the more polite version of the Sasak language. With regards to pedagogical values, Lakshmi and Paul propose two types of values: innate and acquired values [8]. Innate values are the internal value that comprises love, care, empathy, honesty, hate, etc. Acquired values, on the other hand, are external values that one acquires as a result of contact or exposure to his/her immediate environment. These values include convenience, status, ambition, power, one's mode of dress, cultural customs, traditions, habits, and tendencies.

Based on the aforementioned introduction, it is interesting to analyze this particular discourse of *selabar* from the perspectives of politeness and pedagogical values.

2 Method

This research was descriptive qualitative which applied an ethnography approach as the study intended to investigate politeness strategies and the pedagogical values of *selabar* procession in the Sasak community. The data were collected using various techniques from the *selabar* procession in East Lombok. These techniques were field notes, direct observation, and interviews with Sasak community leaders involved in the procession. Using Brown and Levinson's [7] politeness model and the politeness strategy, the data were analyzed qualitatively using the following steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and reporting.

3 Results and Discussion

This study aims to analyze politeness strategies and pedagogical value of *Selabar* in the marriage procession of Sasak culture. Based on data analyses, we found that there are two politeness strategies used by speakers during the *selabar procession*: negative politeness strategy and positive politeness strategy. The negative politeness strategy is marked by apologizing for expressions whereas the positive politeness strategy is marked by greeting and thanking expressions.

3.1 Politeness Strategies

3.1.1 Apologizing as an Evidence of Negative Politeness Strategy

Sasak Community Leader (Groom's side): *Inggih tiang matur keadaan atau kondisi dedare Usdiana Susilawati dalam leadaan sehat walafiat wantapun atur tiang yen arak sisip lempir atur tiang dewek tiang pun nurge atau nedde agung agung sinampure sareng pelunguh sami selaku pengemban adat pengemong krame ring petongosan pun niki wassalamu'alaikum.*

(Yes, I would like to tell you that the girl (Usdiana Susilawati) is in good and healthy condition. Then, I would like to say sorry if I've made mistakes during this procession and I say thank you for accepting me into your house.)

This ritual was performed when a Sasak community leader from the groom's side informs the bride's family that their daughter was 'kidnapped' for marriage. This information should include the name of the boy who is marrying her, where he lives, and

also how the next ritual (traditionally or religiously) will be carried out. The Negative politeness strategy is marked by the word 'ampure' (sorry).

Sasak Community Leader (groom's side): *Assalamu'alaikum warrahmatullahi wabarakatuh, ampure ntan sak mengganggu pelungguh, maksud tiang niki, yak te nyampean berite bahwa bijen pelungguh atas name Usdiana Susilawati merarik kance Heru Darma Wijaya sak bebale lek Pengkelakmas. Oleh sebabn sak no berembe care te apakah yak te gawek adat bejulu atau adat keagamaan.*

(*Assalamu'alaikum warrahmatullahi wabarakatuh*, I am sorry if I am bothering you. But I would like to inform you that your daughter Usdiana Susilawati has been married to Heru who comes from Pengkelakmas, Sakra Barat district. Regarding this information, I would like to ask for suggestions as to how we shall carry out the next ritual. Shall we go first with the traditional marriage custom (agreeing on sorong serah) or religious custom (of *akad nikah*).

This type of discourse containing an apology and at the same time providing information about what happened to the girl (which might be upsetting for the girl's family) is referred to as 'negative politeness strategy.

3.1.2 Greeting as Another Evidence of Positive Politeness Strategy

Sasak Community Leader (groom's side): *assalamu'alaikum wa'alaikumussalam warrahmatullahi wabarakatuh.*

Sasak Community Leader (bride's side): *Wa'alaikumussalam warrohmatullahi wabarakatuh.*

This interaction belonged to greeting expressions used by both leaders. This greeting is commonly used by the Sasak community when they visit each other's places. This expression is positive politeness because the speaker was trying to respect the hearer. A positive politeness strategy is marked by the greeting expression of '*Assalamu'alaikum*' (peace be upon you).

3.1.3 Thanking as Expression of Positive Politeness

Sasak Community Leader (bride's side): *inggih, dane jero keliang dewek tiangpun tampi kerauhan pelungguh sami terkait kance selabaran mangkin bareng bareng.*

(Yes, I also thank you for giving the information however, it is possible to inform the girl's family related to Marriage ritual together.)

This expression was produced in the context where the Sasak community leader from the bride's side thanked the Sasak community leader from the groom's side who informed the kidnapping. This expression is a positive politeness strategy and is marked by *tampi kerauhan* (thank you).

3.2 Pedagogical Values

Using Lakshmi and Paul's [8] classification of pedagogical values, it is found that the pedagogical values evident in the *selabar* rituals are in the forms of innate and acquired values. Innate values include honesty, forgiveness, thankfulness, and responsibility whereas acquired value is communication value.

3.2.1 Innate Value

Innate value categorized into some differences: the first is honesty value. It was shown by the action of representatives of prospective of man to inform the woman family that their daughter was married. This value is proved by the expression as follow:

Sasak Community Leader (groom's side): *assalamu'alaikum warrohmatullahi wabarakatuh. Inggih ringsonten pun niki dewek titiang marekring arepan dene sedaye. Inggih mawanan keparekan dewek tiang pun niki tapan dikayang sareng dane kepale dukuh Gadungmas naturang sejati selabar dedare suci Usdiana Susilawati sak magenah ring pedukuhan Gadungmas Sakra Barat panigare sak teapulang raras atau terariang sareng terune Heru Darma Wijaya sak magenah ring pedukuhan Pengkelakmas Sakra Barat panigare.* (Assalamu'alaikum warrahmatullahi wabarakatuh, yess, i come to you because i have been asked by headman of Pengkelakmas village, Sakra Barat district to give you information that the girl whose name is Usdiana Susilawati who come from Gadungmas Village, Sakra Barat district has kidnaped by Heru Darma Wijaya who comes from Pengkelakmas Village, Sakra Barat district).

The second is forgiveness value. It was seen when the bride's family forgave the groom's family for the kidnapping. The third is thankfulness. It was proved when the *Sasak* community leader (bride's side) thanked the *Sasak* community leader (groom's side). The last value is responsibility. It was seen when both families decided to celebrate the wedding ceremony.

3.2.2 Acquired Value

Several values can be learned from the *selabar* procession. If we refer to Laksmi and Paul [6], at least there are three values contained in this *selabar*: mode of dress, cultural customs, and tradition. As previously explained, *selabar* is a marriage tradition of *Sasak*, which has been handed over from generation to generation. Also, there are 'rules' to observe during the whole process of the procession which compose what to wear, what language to speak, including how to behave in general. This then indirectly indicates the inclusion of the three acquired values as proposed by Laksmi and Paul [8].

4 Conclusion

Selabar is a ritual in *Sasak* marriage and it is defined as giving information to the woman's family that their daughter is married. These rituals are conducted by *Sasak* community leaders and representatives of the perspective of the man and woman family. This study found that both families in the *Selabar* procession used the negative politeness strategy and positive politeness strategy. Meanwhile, the educational values in this ritual include innate value and acquired value. Innate values are honesty, forgiveness, thankfulness,

and responsibility while acquired value is communication values. The value of honesty is honesty and it appears when a delegate from the groom's side informs the bride's family about the kidnapping. The value of forgiveness was seen when the bride's family forgives the groom's family for the kidnapping. The value of thankfulness was proved when the *Sasak* community leader (bride's side) thanked the *Sasak* community leader (groom's side). The values of responsibility are the actions and responsibilities of the two families to immediately hold a wedding. Meanwhile, the acquired value is the communication value. It was evident in the language use involving parties during the communication or interaction. Politeness strategy and Pedagogical values of *selabar* are manifested during conversations between the representatives of the prospective groom and the bride's family.

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