

POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN MANDAILING WEDDING CEREMONY

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ABSTRACT

Tujuan dari jurnal ini adalah untuk menemukan strategi kesopanan dalam acara Pernikahan Batak Mandailing Subyek yang diambil dari anggota makkobar dalam upacara Pernikahan ada 5 orang yaitu, mora, anak boru, kahanggi, suhut dan ketua adat Mandailing. Teknik yang digunakan dalam mengumpulkan data adalah observasi dan merekam pembicaraan para anggota dalam acara makkobar. Dan kemudian menginterview ketua adat Mandailing. Jurnal ini meneliti strategi kesopanan dalam Batak Mandailing seperti menggunakan tutur kekerabatan, kata ganti, kalimat tidak langsung dan salam. Kemudian jenis strategi kesopanan yang ditemukan dalam acara pesta pernikahan itu adalah maksim kedermawanan, maksim pujian, maksim kerendahan hati, maksim persetujuan dan maksim simpati. Maksim yang paling sering diucapkan oleh pembicara adalah maksim kerendahan hati. Alasan maksim ini paling sering dipakai karena pembicara mencoba untuk membuat komunikasi lebih nyaman dan lebih dekat kepada pendengar. Karena dalam kebudayaan Mandailing, pembicara dilarang untuk berbicara secara langsung, pembicara mencoba untuk menghindari ketidaknyamanan dalam pesta. Kemudian meminimalkan jarak diantara pembicara dan pendengar dengan cara saling mendekatkan satu dengan yang lainnya.

Key words : Politeness, Maxim, Batak Mandailing Wedding

A. INTRODUCTION

Interaction among members of society is done by the use of a language. It means that language as a communication is central to all human existence and social process. To make the interaction fruitful, a medium of communication is obviously necessary because communication has an important role to express some ideas, feelings, thoughts and intentions. Therefore it seems impossible to do some interaction without using communication.

The relationship between culture and politeness has been studied by the researcher. Culture is part of human being. It is considered to be group-specific behavior that is acquired, at least in part, from social influences. It is created and transmitted to others in a society. Cultures are not the product of lone individuals. They are the continuously evolving products of people interacting with each other. Cultural

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patterns such as language and politics make no sense except in terms of the interaction of people. Because culture is the result of the interaction among people.²

Misunderstanding can occur from differing cultural views of politeness. Polite behavior and speech in one culture can be actually perceived as impolite in another culture. Every country has different culture; even everyone also has different personal culture. They have rule and policy when they speak something. If they come out from the rule, they will be judged as impolite person. Misunderstanding can be avoided in interaction inter-ethnic culture if we can express our politeness through our way and utterances. Knowing the culture of the hearer will help the language users to build comfortable interaction and build our image or face in the hearer point of view. One can be impolite if he/she cannot identify the hearer's culture and the contexts of the situation. Different tribes have different way to say something. It is based on the hearer's culture and context.

Politeness is a way to show the respectful. One will try to be polite with other people to attract their attention. The speaker will try to know who the listener is, the status, the age and the politeness strategy between the speaker and the listener. The level of politeness is fixed by the level of age.³ Even though there is a power relation and occupation between the speaker and the listener, politeness relates to community or culture.

Mandailingnese is one of several numbers of ethnic groups in Indonesia which is known as ethnic group that uses politeness in communication. Mandailingnese use its language in daily life. In making communication to interact, Mandailing is familiar to be polite or in Mandailingnese language calls *hasopanon*. To be polite is very important because politeness is the way to avoid conflict in communication.

To be polite in Mandailing language are related to the action that is taboo to do and to say. It is called "*pantang*". The way to talk to someone who is honored will be different when they speaking to others. For example, when speaking *to mora* (the group of people which is very honored in Mandailingnese culture), *anakboru* is not free talk.

²Kraft and Ronald Geluykens (eds.), *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics and Inter language English*, Munich: Lincom Europa, p.3-20

³Nasution, B. 2006. *Morfologi Bahasa*. Jakarta: Pdan K

Mandailing people usually use modesty as a one of the value in “Makkobar” . For example, *anakboru* (from the male family) said that “*inda adong nataroban nihami, on maido nabisa hami oban indahan nasumargule*” it means that, *anakboru* said to *mora* that they just bring a rice without fish, but the fact, they bring rice with the fish. So, from this example *anakboru* use modesty maxim to show their appreciate to *mora*.

Nowdays, practically this phrase has been changed. It can be seen that religion has change this culture. It is caused by people have believed that there is only one God who created us. They do not use the phrase to praise their *mora*. Culturally, it has broken the culture of Mandailingnese which maintain the politeness but it is not being problem and everyone has done the change. The strategy to use the phrase of being polite has not being used not only in daily life but also in some cultural parties.

Related to makkobar, the relatives of group of people from the woman or bride are called *Mora* to the relatives of the man or bridegroom called *anakboru*. Therefore, *anakboru* tries to be polite as good as possible in wedding ceremony where the oral communication happens during this party. For this reason, it is better to know the politeness expressed in *Makkobar*.

There are many theories of politeness. But in this study the politeness focus in Makkobar will be analyzed based on the maxims state that politeness language basically have to pay attention to the six maxim of politeness, there are tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim and sympathy maxim.⁴

B. CONCEPT OF POLITENESS

1. Review of Literature

This study is related to the theory of politeness strategies which are stated by some theorists. Politeness is the best expressed as the practical application of good manners or etiquette. Leech (1980: 19) defines it as ‘strategic conflict avoidance’, which can be measured in terms of the degree of effort put into the avoidance of conflict situation’ and the establishment and maintenance of comity. The avoidance of conflict is represented as a conscious effort on part of the person being polite. If politeness is

⁴Leech, Geoffrey. (1993: 206-207). *Principles of Pragmatics*, London: Longman

behavior which aims at the establishment and maintenance of comity, this must mean that people evaluate other forms of behavior subverting those aims.

Furthermore, politeness is an interaction, can then be defined as the means employed to show awareness of another person's face.⁵ In this sense, politeness can be accomplished in situation of social distance or closeness. Showing awareness for another person's face when that other seems socially distant is often described in terms of respect or defiance. Showing the equivalent awareness when the other is socially close is often described in terms of friendliness, camaraderie, or solidarity. It means the distance and closeness are the two important factors in politeness. He concluded that in interaction, politeness strategy is defined as the means used to show the awareness of person's face. Politeness strategy can be used where it is close or far socially. In conclusion, Politeness strategy is used to save the face threatening act by showing deference and closeness.

Types of politeness strategy are: The Tact maxim requires the speaker to say something that minimize the cost to other or conversely that maximize the benefit to the other, the Generosity maxims requires minimal benefit to self or maximum cost to self, the Approbation Maxim requires minimal dispraise of other, the Modesty maxim requires minimal praise of self or maximum dispraise of self, the Agreement maxim requires minimum disagreement between self and other or maximum sympathy between self and other.

-The Tact Maxim

The tact maxim is minimizing the expression of beliefs which imply cost to other, maximize the expression of beliefs which imply benefit to other. By the tact maxim it is meant that we try to be tactful in a communication by observing two sub maxim: 1) we try to minimize cost to others and 2) we try to maximize benefit to others. For example:

Could I interrupt you for a second?

If I could just clarify this then

The other example of the tact maxim is as follows:

“Won't you sit down?”

⁵Bogdan, R.C and S.K Biglen (1992). *Qualitative Research for Education*. Syracuse University. United State of America. Allyn and Bacon

It is the directive / expositive utterance. The utterance is spoken to ask the hearer sitting down. The speaker uses indirect utterance to be more polite and minimizing cost to the hearer. This utterance implies that sitting down is benefit to the hearer.

-The Generosity Maxim

-The Generosity Maxim

The Generosity maxim is to minimize the expression of benefit to self, maximize the expression of cost to self. By the generosity maxim, it is meant that we all try to be generous in a communication in that 1) we try to minimize benefit to self and 2) we try to maximize cost to self.

For example:

“You must come and dinner with us”

In this case the speaker implies that cost of the utterance is to his self. Meanwhile the utterance implies that benefit is for the hearer.

-The Approbation Maxim

The approbation maxim is minimizing the expression of belief which expresses dispraise of other, maximize the expression of beliefs which express approval of other. By the approbation maxim, it is meant that we all try to be approbation in communicating in that

1) We try to maximize praise of others.

For example:

“I heard you singing at the karaoke last night. It was great!”

The expression is a congratulation utterance that maximizes praise of other. Thus this utterance is included the approbation maxim

-The Modesty Maxim

The modesty maxim is minimizing the expression of praise of self; maximize the expression of dispraise of self. By the modesty maxim, it is meant that we all try to be modest in that 1) we try to minimize praise of self and 2) we try to maximize dispraise of self.

For example:

“Oh, I’m so stupid I didn’t make a mote of our lecture. Did you?”

The other example:

“Please accept this small gift as prize of your achievement”.

In this case, the utterance above is categorized as the modesty maxim because the speaker maximizes dispraise of himself. The speaker notices his utterance by using “small gift”.

-The Agreement Maxim

The Agreement maxim runs as follows, minimize the expression of disagreement between self and other; maximize the expression of agreement between self and other. By the agreement maxim, it is meant that we all try to be agreeable to one another in a dialog in that 1) we try to minimize the disagreement between self and others, and 2) we try to maximize agreement between self and others.

For example:

A: “English is a difficult language to learn”

B: “True, but the grammar is quite easy”

From the example, B actually does not agree that all part of English language difficult to learn. He does not express his disagreement strongly to be more polite. The polite answer will influence the effect of the hearer. In this case B’s answer minimize his disagreement using partial agreement, “true, but...”

2. Research Methodology

This research will be conducted by applying qualitative research design. It is qualitative research because it is related to the language use phenomena in society. Qualitative research has natural setting, as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key of instrument.⁶ Researcher entered and spent considerable time in the location. The data were collected on the premises and supplemented by the understanding that was gained by being on location. In addition, mechanically recorded materials were reviewed in their entirety by the researcher with the researcher’s insight being the key instrument for analysis

3. Data Analysis

This study deals with politeness strategies in Mandailingnese Language. The subject of the study were 5 native speakers of Mandailing in Makkobar event. They are Mora, AnakBoru, Kahanggi, Suhut and Harajaon (King). The observation is faced to the activity done in *Makkobar* event while recorded all the utterances produced by all the

⁶Brown, Penelope and S.C Levinson. (1987). *Politeness: Universal in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

speakers. A set of interview was conducted to the headman of Mandailing called *hatobangonadat* to get the data on reason for using dominant type of politeness strategies.

a. Politeness Strategy by using Tact Maxim

Tact maxim meant we try to be tactful in a communication; trying to minimize cost to others and trying to maximize benefit to other. Here was tact maxim that was found in “Makkobar” event.

Suhut:

“Anggo inda mamboratkou sudena koum sasolkot, pos do roha name nian anso leng dison hita sampe siap pesta on”

(If not disturb all of the family, I hope we still in here until finish the party)

Interpretation

In this utterance Suhut as the owner party said that He hope all the family still in the party until finish the party. This shows Suhut used tact Maxim.

b. Politeness Strategy by using Generosity Maxim

The generosity states: minimize the expression of benefit to self; maximize the expression of cost to self. It means that the speaker try to be generous in a communication. The generosity maxim focused on the speaker and says that the other should be put first instead of the self-hoped to respect each other. Here are some generosity that are found in “Makkobar” event:

AnakBoru :

“Jumolonihatamarisamo-samohita rap mangucapkonsyukur Alhamdulillah tuTuhantanaMahaPenyayangimadungmangalehenkaruniadohotnikmatdihitaima waktuhalapangannamambaenhitabisamarkumpuldibagasnamartua on.”

(The first, let’s we say thanks to our Merciful Lord that gives us the gift and the pleasant to us so we can collect in this house).

Interpretation

AnakBoru in his utterance gives award to our God. In this utterance Anak Boru using Approbation Maxim.

c. Politeness Strategy by using Modesty Maxim

The modesty maxim states: minimize the expression of praise of self; maximize the expression of dispraise of self. By modesty maxim, it's meant that the speaker try to be modest. Here was expression of modesty maxim that found in "Makkobar" event:

Suhut :

"Tarsongonon dope rasokina, nabisahamilehen, parasokion hamu ma aha na di jolottaon, deget-deget dibaen hamu"

(Just it that we can give to you, please eat the food in front of us, you must enjoy it)

Interpretation:

Suhut as the owner of the party want to serve plain food to the guest. He said that the food is not delicious, but the fact the food is very delicious. In this utterance, suhut using Modesty Maxim.

d. Politeness Strategy by using Agreement Maxim

The agreement maxim states: minimize disagreement between self and others; maximize sympathy between self and others. Here Agreement Maxim that was found in "Makkobar" event:

AnakBoru:

"Anggo hata nasian anak boru da leng songon hata nimora i ma, namanumpuk manusun disima hata nami, diajamita ni mora i jamitanamia mai botima hatana"

(Our statement from anakboru is the same with the mora's statement, we follow with our mora opinion, what is mora want same with what we want)

Interpretation:

Anakboru showed that he agree with mora's statement, It means he used Agreement Maxim.

e. Politeness Strategy by using Sympathy Maxim

The sympathy maxim: minimize antipathy between self and other; maximize sympathy between self and others. Here sympathy maxim that was found in "Makkobar" event:

AnakBoru:

"Santabi sapulu, manyambut manyaluangi sapa-sapa munyu, sanga madung lalu napuran, madung lalu mada i, dohot sonang do roha nama manarimo i"

(With respect full to answer your question, we had been accepted the betel vine and we felt happy to received it)

Interpretation

Anakboru express their politeness by using Sympathy Maxim, Anakboru is very grateful to receive the betel vine from the suhut

The Percentage of Politeness Strategies used by Mandailingnese People in “*Makkobar*” Wedding ceremony

No	Types of Politeness Strategies	Number	Percent (%)
1.	Tact Maxim	1	3. 57%
2.	Generosity Maxim	3	10. 71%
3.	Approbation Maxim	6	21. 43%
4.	Modesty Maxim	8	28. 57%
5.	Agreement Maxim	6	21. 43%
6.	Sympathy Maxim	4	14. 29%
	Total	28	100%

Table 4.1.1 presents the percentages of the types of politeness strategies applied by

Mandailingnese people. The percentages of Tact Maxim are 3.57%, Generosity Maxim is 10.71%, Approbation Maxim is 21.43%, Modesty Maxim is 28.57, Agreement Maxim is 21.43, Sympathy maxim is 14.29. The dominant type of politeness strategy applied by Mandailingnese people in *Makkobar* wedding ceremony is Modesty maxim strategy.

4. Findings

From the data analysis previously, some findings are specified based on the aim at describing politeness strategies in Mandailing Wedding Ceremony as the following:

1. Mandailing Language applied the types of politeness strategies. They are Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty Maxim, Agreement Maxim and Sympathy Maxim.
2. Compared to Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Agreement Maxim and Sympathy Maxim, Modesty Maxim strategy is dominantly used in that party.
3. The reason for using Modesty Maxim strategy as the dominant strategy is the speakers who are involved in the party try to be modest and getting

closer to the hearer. As there is Anak Boru or the prohibition to talk directly, the speaker tries to avoid the recklessness in the party. Thus, the speaker tried to get closer in order to unite the two families from female and male.

C. DISCUSSIONS

Politeness from one community or culture is different from other communities or other culture after doing the research about the politeness strategies in Mandailing language it can be discussed.

First, there are six types of politeness strategies found in this research. They are Tact Maxim, Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty maxim, Agreement maxim, and Sympathy Maxim. The types of politeness strategy by Leech analyses the politeness strategy and its constituent maxims follows: The Tact Maxim requires the speaker to say something that minimizes the cost to the other or conversely that maximizes the benefit to the other, the Generosity Maxims requires minimal benefit to self or maximum cost to self, the Approbation Maxim requires minimal dispraise of other, the Modesty maxim requires minimal praise of self or maximum dispraise of self, the Agreement Maxim requires minimum disagreement between self and other, the Sympathy Maxim requires minimum antipathy between self and other or maximum sympathy between self and other.⁷ For the result, it can be seen that all types of maxim by Leech applied in *Makkobar* Wedding Ceremony by Mandailingnese people.

Then, Modesty maxim is the types of politeness strategy used dominantly. This type of politeness strategy is used dominantly because Mandailing people always tends to be more modest and keep closeness among the speakers especially between Anak boru and Mora. Anak Boru is not allowed to speak freely to Mora. They always tend to be more modest, if not they will be called *nasumar sopanon* arrogant person.

Finally, from the findings that the use of phrase are still maintained culturally. Past time ago, the use of Phrase such as “Mora songon tuhanta” has been changed. There was no phrase by using that utterance. It has been changed into the use of Maxim. It can be seen culture of being polite has been changed in Mandailing language.

⁷Leech, G.N. 1983. *Principles of pragmatics*. London and New York: London.

D. CONCLUSSION

This thesis is about the politeness strategies in Mandailingnese language, in the context of *Makkobar* in wedding ceremony. There are six maxim used by Mandailingnese people in order to be polite in the party. The types of politeness strategies are Tact Maxim, Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty Maxim, Agreement Maxim and Sympathy Maxim. In analysis the type of politeness strategies, there is some useful insight on the dominant type of politeness strategy used by the speaker of Mandailing language in the party. There are some points to be exposed in relation to the types of politeness strategies.

1. Mandailingnese people have different ways to express politeness in communication
2. The type of politeness strategy which is dominantly used by Mandailingnese people in the party is Modesty Maxim. The reason for applying Modesty Maxim strategy as the dominantly typed used by Mandailingnese people in *Makkobar* wedding ceremony is speakers who are involved in that party try to be modest to save the hearer's face by getting closer to the hearer. As there is Anak Boru or the prohibition to talk directly, the speaker tries to avoid the recklessness in the party.
3. Something which is polite in one culture can be perceived as impolite in another culture. Although, there will be the tendency that every culture also has the similarity of using politeness strategy.

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