

The Implementation Of Politeness Principles By Javanese People: A Cultural Pragmatic Study

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Abstract: Javanese is one of ethnic languages in Indonesia which is usually spoken by people, mostly, who live in Central Java and Yogyakarta. It has three levels of language, *Ngoko*, *krama madya*, and *krama hinggil*. Each level is spoken in different situations. It depends on the utterers, hearers, and place. Based on those levels, Javanese is studied using politeness principles in pragmatic study. Some examples of Javanese utterances in any levels are analyzed by using politeness principles to show the appropriateness of using the language level pragmatically.

Keywords: Javanese, Javanese Society, *ngoko*, *krama madya*, *krama hinggil*, politeness principles.

I. INTRODUCTION

Javanese society or Javanese ethnic is one of the biggest ethnics in Indonesia who inhabit mostly in the areas of Central Java, East Java, Yogyakarta. Those areas are located in Java island, in the south part of Indonesia. This ethnic dominates the Indonesian inhabitants because almost 50% of Indonesia inhabitants are Javanese ethnic. This ethnic still maintains its cultures so that they still exist until now. Besides, it has a big number of population, and they cooperate to preserve their traditional cultures, from dancing until mystical belief.

Language is a tool to create thoughts and feelings and as the main means of communication. The other functions of languages are such as (1) in the development of Javanese literature and culture, (2) as a national asset, (3) as a means of communication, (4) as the speakers' identity, (5) the instructional language for learning process in the Elementary Schools in Java, (6) as a instructional language in traditional performing arts activities (Dyah Padmaningsih, 2000: 1).

The daily language of this ethnic is Javanese. Actually, only a few of those who use the Indonesian language as the language of everyday life, because Javanese language is their native language. However, because the days are growing, and the society is increasingly getting multicultural, some people prefer to use the Indonesian language than Java language.

Javanese has differences in level, it is called *unggah-ungguh* (the way to show the politeness). This language is divided into three general levels, they are *ngoko* (the lowest), *krama madya* (the middle), and *krama hinggil* (the highest or the most polite). Each level has different lexicons and intonations. In using it, someone has to aware with who he/she is speaking and where the conversation takes place. This levelling is one of factors to determine the social status of Javanese society, for example common people will use *krama hinggil* to speak with someone who has higher status. Besides that, language level also becomes an important factor in politeness. *Krama Hinggil* is the most polite one. Therefore, when a child is speaking to older people, for example teacher or parents, he/she should use *Krama Hinggil*.

II. DISCUSSION

Javanese can not be separated from *unggah-ungguh*, politeness, and social status, so that the relationship between speaker and hearer should be considered. As mentioned in introduction, when speaking with a person with higher social status, for example a nobleman, the speaker should use *krama hinggil*. The differences of utterance levels create variety of Javanese lexicons, for example the word “going home”, in *Ngoko*, it is “*bali*”, in *krama madya*, it is “*wangsul*”, and in *krama hinggil*, it is “*kondur*”. Lexicon variety and utterance levels make Javanese is interesting to discuss. In this paper, the writer writes about the implementation of politeness principles in Javanese.

A. Pragmatics:

Yule (1996:3) mentioned that pragmatics is a study of meaning delivered by speaker, and interpreted by the hearer. Therefore, this study is more related to the analysis about what the utterances mean rather than the meaning of words or phrases used in those utterances. It can be concluded that pragmatics is study of language meaning by relating to the context of speech situation.

B. Politeness Principles:

Geoffrey Leech divides politeness principles into 6 types:

1. Tact Maxim:

The tact maxim is minimizing cost to other and maximizing benefit to other. This maxim is applied in Searle’s speech act, commissives and directives called by Leech as impositives. Commissives is found in utterances that express speaker’s intention in the future action. Then, Directives/ impositives are expressions that influence the hearer to do action.

2. Generosity Maxim:

The generosity maxim states to minimizing benefit to self and maximizing cost to self. Like tact maxim, the generosity maxim occurs in commissives and directives/ impositives. This maxim is centered to self, while the tact maxim is to other.

3. Approbation Maxim:

The approbation maxim requires to minimizing dispraise of other and maximizing praise of other. This maxim instructs to avoid saying unpleasant things about others and especially about the hearer. This maxim occurs in assertives/ representatives and expressives. Assertives/ representatives are utterances that express the true propositional. Meanwhile, expressive are utterances that show the speaker feeling.

4. Modesty Maxim:

In the modesty maxim, the participants must minimize praise of self and maximize dispraise of self. This maxim is applied in assertives/ representatives and expressives like the approbation maxim. Both the approbation maxim and the modesty maxim concern to the degree of good or bad evaluation of other or self that is uttered by the speaker. The approbation maxim is exemplified by courtesy of congratulation. On other hand, the modesty maxim usually occurs in apologies.

5. Agreement Maxim:

In the agreement maxim, there is tendency to maximize agreement between self and other people and minimize disagreement between self and other. The disagreement, in this maxim, usually is expressed by regret or partial agreement. This maxim occurs in assertives/ representatives illocutionary act.

6. Sympaty Maxim:

The sympathy maxim explains to minimize antipathy between self and other and maximize sympathy between self and other. In this case, the achievement being reached by other must be congratulated. On other hand, the calamity happens to other, must be given sympathy or condolences. This maxim is applicable in assertives/ representatives.

C. The Implementation of Politeness Principles in Javanese Society:

Javanese society is famous with their politeness towards other people. Javanese utterances is polite, especially when they speak using *krama hinggil*. They uphold the manners and *unggah ungguh* in this language. When someone speaks to older people or respected people, he/she will use polite *krama*. It shows that Javanese society respect each other very well.

Another thing about Javanese is that Javanese people never speak straight to the point as other society do. They tend to speak flowery and round and round for the purpose to not offend other people with their words. Besides that, Javanese society prefer to talk people's bad things behind them, rather than speak directly in front of the person. There are many things that Javanese people do to keep the face of themselves and other people.

It motivates the writer to do a research about the implementation of politeness principles in Javanese according to the utterance levels.

1. Tact Maxim and Approbation Maxim:

The tact maxim is minimizing cost to other and maximizing benefit to other. This is applied for promising and offering utterances. When someone offers some help, Javanese people tend to refuse, even actually they need help. On the other side, Javanese people prefer to offer some helps to other people.

Example:

Context: B is passing A's house. A is painting his wall on the front of his house.

Conversation:

B: *Kowe lagi ngopo?* (What are you doing?)

A: *Iki lagi ngecat. Akeh tenan sing kudu dicat e.* (Im painting. There are many parts of the wall that should be painted.)

B: *Meh tak rewangi po? Mumpung aku selo.* (Do you need my help? I'm not doing nothing now.)

A: *Rasah lah. Matur Nuwun.* (No, thanks anyway.)

The above illustration is one of conversations using *Jawa Ngoko*. Usually this level is used when the speaker and hearer have close relationship, or they are peer-friends, so that it is okay to use *Jawa Ngoko*, the lowest level of Javanese. When someone offers some help, like what B is doing, A tends to refuse. Pragmatically, A needs helps because he complains by saying "*Akeh tenan sing kudu dicat e.* (There are many parts of the wall that should be painted.)" However, he prefers to refuse.

On the other side, B as the hearer applies approbation maxim, it is offering help. Sometimes, it is only a small talk to show his politeness when passing someone. He even can not make it when he should really help A. Therefore, he applies approbation maxim. It proves that Javanese society like to do small talk. That small talk is the form of greeting when passing or dropping by someone's house. If B really wants to help, he will come to A, take the paint brush and do as A does, even A is refusing. However, it is only a small talk, he will do it while walking away.

2. Generosity Maxim and Modesty Maxim:

Both maxims are minimizing praise of self and maximize dispraise of self. These maxims are usually applied in assertive and expressive utterances. When someone wants to express his/her feeling or comments, he/she will give good comment rather than the bad one.

Example:

Context: A is dropping by to the B's house. B is washing his car.

Conversation:

A: *Weh, mobilmu anyar po?* (Wow, it is a new car?)

B: *Ho'o. Wingi bar tuku, murah sih.* (Yeah. I bought it yesterday and it was cheap.)

A: *Aku ndelok njerone yo?* (Can I see inside?)

B: *Yo kono.* (Sure)

A: *Njerone lumayan kok. Opo meneh nek ditambahi AC.* (It is good. But it would be better if you install AC)

In that conversation, A is applying generosity maxim. He praises B's new car by saying "*Njerone lumayan kok.* (It is good.)" To express the negative comment, A will not say it directly. He will praise first, then mention the negative one, "*Opo meneh nek ditambahi AC.* (But it would be better if you install AC)". Therefore, B will not be offended.

On the other side, B is applying modesty maxim. When he is praised, he will be modest. For example, when A asks, "*Weh, mobilmu anyar po?* (Wow, it is a new car?)", B answers "*Ho'o. Wingi bar tuku, murah sih.* (Yeah. I bought it yesterday and it was cheap.)". He is modest by saying that his car was cheap. Although, his car is actually expensive.

3. Agreement Maxim:

This maxim maximizes agreement between self and other people and minimize disagreement between self and other. It is usually applied in expressive utterances. When someone expresses his/her feeling, the hearer will respond with agreement.

Example 1:

A: *Cah kuwi ayu tenan yo* (That girl is very beautiful, isn't she?)

B: *Iyo ayu tenan.* (Yes, she is.)

On the above example. The hearer agrees with the utterer's opinion. In Javanese society, when the hearer does not agree with the utterer, he will respond indirectly. He will state other reasons to express his disagreement.

Example 2

A: *Cah kuwi ayu tenan yo.*(That girl is very beautiful, isn't she?)

B: *Ho'o sih. Tapi kok jerawat.* (Yes she is. Unfortunately, she has many pimples in her face.)

In the second example, B does not agree with A's opinion. First, it sounds that he agrees with A's opinion by saying *Ho'o sih.* (Yes she is.) Then he express his disagreement by saying "*Tapi kok jerawat.*" (Unfortunately, she has many pimples in her face.) He tries to express his own opinion indirectly.

4. Sympaty Maxim:

The sympathy maxim explains to minimize antipathy between self and other and maximize sympathy between self and other. This maxim is usually applied in assertive and expressive utterances. When someone is expression something, he will respond it well.

Example:

Context: A wants to give an invitation letter to B.

Conversation:

A: *Aku meh nikah lho. Iki undanganne. Teko yo.* (I'm getting married. Would you like to come?)

B: *Wah selamat yo. Insya Allah aku teko.* (Wow, congratulations. Insya Allah I will)

On the above example, B is applying sympathy maxim by congratulating her. With this sympathy maxim, someone will only respond the utterer's statement as it is. When A said that she is getting married, B congratulates her. In Javanese society, the expressive utterances can have double meanings, either it is literal expression or small talk. The purpose is to show the sympathy to the utterer.

III. CONCLUSION

Javanese society is one of the societies which speak with different level of utterances, *ngoko*, *krama madya*, and *krama hinggil*. In using language, Javanese society prefer to say small talk to save someone's feeling rather than express it directly. Therefore, this research studies about the implementation of politeness principles in Javanese society. As the result, Javanese utterances are appropriate with the politeness principles. Javanese society always prioritize politeness and try to not offend other people. In some examples above, it is explained that even the person disagrees with the utterer, he will not mention the disagreement directly. He prefers to do some small talk before saying the purpose. The moral value in Javanese society in saving *unggah-ungguh* and politeness should be applied by other societies. However, nowadays, people prefer to speak straight to the point without saving someone's feeling. It is a choice, however. Javanese culture teaches people to speak careful and not offend other people.

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