Politeness of Welcoming a Guest in Manggaraian Speech Community: a Socio-Pragmatic Study

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Abstrak

Kesantunan merupakan aspek yang sangat penting dalam melakukan tindak komunikasi antar individu atau kelompok dalam suatu komunitas tutur. Menyambut tamu merupakan salah satu bentuk interaksi sosial yang secara inheren meliputi kesantunan dalam suatu masyarakat tutur. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi kesantunan menyambut tamu dalam masyarakat tutur Manggarai. Teknik perekaman video dan wawancara digunakan untuk pengumpulan data. Delapan video direkam dan ditranskripsikan dalam teks. Wawancara mendalam diterapkan untuk memperdalam data. Selanjutnya, data diinterpretasi dengan teori sosiolinguistik dan pragmatik. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa masyarakat tutur Manggarai cenderung menerapkan strategi kesantunan positif dan strategi kesantunan off-the record. Strategi kesantunan positif terutama digunakan untuk membangun hubungan yang erat dan ramah serta untuk menunjukkan rasa hormat kepada tamu. Strategi kesantunan positif ditandai dengan penggunaan honorifik ite, tite, mori, ema, dan yo sebagai downtoner. Strategi kesantunan offthe record diterapkan untuk menunjukkan kemurahan hati, kerendahan hati, dan penghargaan kepada tamu. Strategi kesantunan ini diungkapkan melalui majas metafora dan ungkapan kerendahan hati. Faktor sosial yang menentukan penggunaan strategi kesantunan tersebut berkaitan dengan konteks acara, usia, relasi, dan status tamu. Tampak jelas bahwa masyarakat tutur Manggarai menerapkan kesantunan dalam upacara penyambutan tamu untuk mencapai tiga manfaat, yaitu menunjukkan rasa hormat, menjaga hubungan baik, dan melayani tamu sebagai anggota komunitas.

Kata Kunci: Manggarai, komunitas tutur, kesantunan, kajian sosio-pragmatik

Abstract

Politeness is a crucial aspect in performing an act of communication among individuals or between groups in a speech community. Welcoming a guest is a form of social interaction that inherently covers politeness in a speech community. This research mainly aims to explore politeness of welcoming a guest in Manggaraian speech community. Video-recording and interview were the techniques used to collect the data. Eight videos were recorded and transcribed in text. Further an in-depth interview was employed to probe the data. The data were interpreted in sociolinguistics and pragmatics theories. The findings reveal that the Manggaraian speech community tend to apply positive politeness strategy and off-the record politeness strategy. Positive politeness strategy was mainly employed to build a close relation and friendliness as well as to show a respect to a guest. Positive politeness strategy was marked in honorifics *ite, mori,ema*, and downtoner *yo*. Off-the record politeness strategy was utilized

to designate genoristy, modesty, and approbation to a guest. This politeness strategy was indicated in metaphorical expressions. The social factors that determine the use of those politenes strategies are related to the context of event, age, relation, and status of guest. In this study, the Manggaraian speech community employ politeness in the ritual of welcoming a guest to achieve three benefits, namely manifesting a respect, maintaining a good relation, and serving a guest as the member of the community.

Keywords: Manggaraian, Speech Community, Politeness, Socio-pragmatics study

1. Introduction

In a speech community, language serves various functions both for social interaction and cultural practices. For social interaction, language is used to carry out many affairs such as the need of communication, socialization, self-adjusment, interpersonal relation, and a means of social control. From cultural side, language is a crucial element of practising, maintaining, and preserving traditions, rituals as well as nurturing values. It is, therefore, to achieve those goals, interactants should apply politeness (Gao et al., 2021). Politeness is an inherent part or property of language which is reflected in the choice of appropriate words, phrases, sentences, utterances, speech acts or discourse.

Politeness is an indispensable component that significantly prevails in interaction. It facilitates the process of communicating ideas from speakers to hearers. It has such benefit that the communication naturally runs well, and the interactants (speakers) can convey a particular message and intention to hearers without any pressure. Moreover, politeness, to a certain extent, helps speakers adapt their language use in order to anticipate the risk of communication failure as well as to create such a pleasant situation between speakers and hearers. Hamrakulova (2020) stated that politeness makes people more relaxed and comfortable during the process of interaction. More positively, there is such a good interpersonal relation that both speakers and hearers attempt to build and maintain. Conversely, when interactants ignore politeness in language use, interaction is at risk of failure. The parties engaged in communication will face problems in achieving their wants and goals.

Brown & Levinson (1987) defined politeness as the speaker's attempt to maintain and preserve hearer's face. The term "face" was adopted from the work of Goffman (1967). The notion of face refers to "the public self-image" of the interactants (p.61). It is not dealt with physical entity of the interactants. Based on the concept, face falls under two types, namely positive and negative face. These two faces are attributed to the want (desire) of the participants engaged in interaction. Negative face is the want of every interactant which is not imposed by others, while positive face is the want of every interactant which is to be appreciated or approved by others. Both are thought of as salient aspects of employing politeness strategies. In context of interaction, face can be preserved, maintained or lost depending primarily on the use of appropriate and accurate language. In line with the concept of face, Lakoff & Ide (2005, p. 4) maintain that politeness covers "consideration for others". It means that speakers should pay respect to hearers as they have self-image to be satisfied positively and negatively. Hence, it is thought of as a crucial aspect that affects the success and the achievement of communicative ends.

In interaction, interactants attempt to minimize the effect of threatening acts through the employment of politeness strategies. Brown & Levinson (1987) proposed politeness strategies in frame of face threatening acts theory (FTAs). Those strategies are classified into four types, namely *bald-on record strategy, positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy, and off-the record strategy*. Each politeness strategy is realized in different sub strategies such as hedged opinions, use in-group identity markers, understatement, overstatement, giving hints, and metaphors. More importantly, the selection of politeness strategies is bound with context and situation of interaction. Some politeness strategies are utilized in a particular context, while others may not occur. In applying politeness, interactants should also consider maxims. Leech (2014, p. 90) has clearly defined the term maxim as "a constraint of communicative behavior with the aim of achieving a particular goal". Maxim encapsulates cost-benefit on the side of speaker to hearer; minimize cost to hearer, while maximize benefit to hearer (Leech, 1983). Theoretically, there are six maxims of politeness: tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and symphaty.

Naturally, politeness is a universal phenomenon. It is an integrated element of communication across language and culture. However, every language and culture has different manifestation of politeness in social interaction (Kamehkhosh & Larina, 2020). Numerous studies of politeness (e.g. Borris & Zecho, 2018; House & Kádár, 2021; Kadar, 2020) have proved that politeness across cultures has a profound distinction that is attributed to culture values and norms. Diversity of culture shapes and modifies the way interactants perform politeness in interaction. Therefore, a cultural aspect provides such a comprehensive and deeper understanding of politeness applied in different speech

communities.

Manggaraian's daily life is bound with local language and culture in Eastern Indonesia. These primary elements shed a light on different dimensions, meaning, and nuances of social life. Linguistically, Manggaraian speech community is the native speakers who speak Manggaraian language (henceforth: Bahasa Manggarai) as a local means of communication. Culturally, daily communication and life are adhered to norms, ethiques, and cultural practices (Menggo & Ndiung, 2021). Further, the Manggaraian speech community strenghten their ethnic group identity by performing various customs, traditions, and rituals. In particular, Manggaraian communities has a unique ritual of welcoming a guest (s) called *tiba meka*. The word *tiba* means welcoming, and the word meka means guest. As the name suggests, the ritual is a special event for welcoming and addressing a guest (s). The guest can be a single person, a group, an insider or outsider who visits to a village, an institution and other parties for a cultural event, a religious meeting, and an official work. On the ritual, a spokesman (caled *laro jaong/mu'u curup*) welcomes a guest in three stages, namely *curu, reis, kapu*. The spokesman acts as the speaker representing villagers or an institution delivering a spoken text, offering a bottle of white local wine (made of palm tree) and a white rooster to the guest (s). There is a number of words, phrases, sentences or utterances expressing gratitude and respect to a guest (s). More particularly, politeness is a key element that is crucial to the success of the guest welcoming ritual.

Politeness is an outstanding pragmatic issue that has been widely investigated in a number of studies in diversed fields and perspectives. In cultural sphere, politeness was explored in numerous researches (Atmawati, 2021; Azwan, 2018; Gao et al., 2021; Kadar, Daniel Z & House, 2021). The studies have revealed the intersection between linguistic politeness and culture. The findings proved that cultural distinction has a direct impact on the realization of politeness. Regarding Manggaraian language and culture, some studies were conducted by (Darong et al., 2022; Menggo & Ndiung, 2021; Sanjaya & Rahardi, 2021; Semana & Menggo, 2022). The results of the previous studies have shed a light on a close relation between language and culture in Manggaraian speech community, specifically in the cases of politeness, gender bias, metaphorical expression, and local wisdom. However, the topic of politeness in the ritual of welcoming a guest still lack of exploration.

2. Method

The study is a qualitative research with the aim to explore politeness in the ritual of welcoming guest in Manggaraian speech community. The source of data are videos of the rituals and six spokesman as the informants. The data which are words and utterances were gathered through video recording and interview. These techniques were applied to obtain sufficient data in natural setting and to capture the context of the rituals. Video recording was taken during during the ritual of welcoming a guest, whereas interview was conducted to probe the particular data in depth reduced from the video transcripts. Six informants (spokesman) were involved in the interview. The data were interpreted in the perspective of socio-pragmatic theory. The procedure of analysis include three steps, namely condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles et.al, 2014).

3. Results and Discussion

Before it proceeds to present the results and discussion, this part begins with the brief general description of the ritual in Manggaraian ethnic group. The ritual of welcoming a guest (s) called *tiba meka* is a customary practice inherited from the tradition of Manggaraian ancestors over generations to date. It is usually performed when a distinguished guest or a group (insider or outsider) pay a visit to a village (*beo*) and an institution for various purposes in Manggarai region. The ritual involves three related stages, namely *curu, reis, kapu*. On the ritual, a spokesperson plays a significant role, that is to welcome a guest by expressing a spoken text termed *torok*. The spoken text contains words, expression or utterances showing politeness, honor, and friendliness.

Based on the data analysis, it was found that the spoken texts delivered in the ritual of welcoming a guest have applied politeness. The employment of politeness was performed to the guests on a special event. The following part is concerned with the interpretation of the ritual based on the eight exercepts.

The samples of the ritual text welcoming a guest displayed below reveal how the politeness strategies were employed to distinguished guests on different events.

Excerpt 1

SM : Yo, ite ema DPRD Propinsi Komisi V. Ite woko cai one sai, manga one ranga tite, reweng dami etai mai kepala sekolah nenggitu ngasang guru-guru, wali di'a lami kamping Morin agu Ngaran. Aram leles keta kebe, tadang keta salang, aram runcung keta buru, tuke keta dureng. Ai mesen momang dite kut cumang ami ngasang ase kae ce SMA Negeri 1 Langke Rembong. Itu ca salang reweng dami. Ca salang kole ite, tegi dami keluarga besar SMA Negeri 1 Langke Rembong. Woko lambu mbaru, liba natas, lejong beo, bengkes dami lelo koe ata toe di'an ce SMA Negeri 1 Langke Rembong. Eme manga ata kurang, tambang koe lite. Ca

salang kole, "**neho tendeng tuka mese, neho joreng tuka koe, nai ca anggit tuka ca leleng**, **naka neho wua nangka, kapu neho wua pau lami ite**". Yo...kepok tuak robo agu manuk kapu ite. (video trannscrip 01)

Excerpt 2

SM : Yo...ite ema wakil Bupati nggitu kole ngasang ema DPR Kabupaten Manggarai, sanggen SKPD ata manga ranga. Yo...woko manga one ranga ite, cai bolo mai sai, reweng dami sanggen kepala SMA/SMK kabupaten Manggarai nenggitu kole tae de ketua panitia agu panitia, nenggitu kole tae de anak dami ata ikut one liga pelajar kabupaten Manggarai, anak koe ine wai agu anak koe ata rona. Ite sembeng keta le Mori dedek, ngalis keta le Mori Jari, woko titte manga bolo mai ranga. Wali dia lami kamping Morin agu Ngaran, aram leles keta kebe, tadang keta salang. Aram lage keta lite wae. Iyo wali dia. Hitu ca salang reweng dami. Ca salang kole ite, woko ho'o ite manga ranga, woko ho'o ite cai, woko ite lejong, bengkes agu tegi nai ngalis tuka ngengga dite kudut lite kpes resmi, kudut lite koe buka liga pelajar ce kabupaten Manggarai tingkat SMA/SMK. Ca salang kole ite, "mut keta lami one pucu, nai ngalis tuka ngengga dite, neho tendeng tuka mese, neho joreng tuka koe. Naka neho wua nangka lite lami, kapu neho wua pau". Iyo kepok tuak curu ite. (video transcript 02)

Excerpt 3

SM : Iyo..., reweng dami pa'ang olo manuk kuni Wae Rebo Desa Satar Lenda Kecamatan Satar Mese Barat. Mori ai mai dite lau mau sondong ata saun landuk one Republik Indonesia, toe hemong agu mamur mai laat ami anak ata sau ce sising uma. Ai landing kembung agu momang ai lau landuk se sising wiga ite ame ata saun landuk to'o one mai lodok mai landing kembung agu momang latang te ami roeng koe ce sising uma, hitu tara mehen kembung dite ata ema laing. Le hitu wali dia'a latang te cai dite ame laing. Mori one lako lelap eta awang, goros lobo oto wiga cai ce desa Satar Lenda, nitu kole mengkek dite kut siap kole tenaga kut sau wake haju, hamar tana, landing kaut nanang ami anak ata lami mbaru adat ce beo Wae Rebo. Mehen keta momang dami mori ai ite landing momang agu kembung ami roeng koe ce beo Wae Rebo. Hitu ata mehen latang te ami anak dom ce beo Wae Rebo ho'o. Asam kamer tite, ho manuk bakok agu tuak te kapu agu naka ite ema menteri. Kepok. (Video transcript 03)

Excerpt 4

SM: Yo... ite ema Gubernur, ema DPR lau mai propinsi, nggitu kole ema Bupati agu wakil Bupati, ema DPR awo mai tana Manggarai raya agu sanggen lawa do.Ite, bombong neho wela lokom nai dami anak, rangkang neho wela lada. Dion danong geger tombon propinsi NTT, leso ho'o lami baca taran, rupa rangan ngasang Gubernur NTT. Ite, neho joreng tuka koe, neho tendeng tuka mese landing ita taran ema Gubernur lau mai propinsi NTT. Iyo...ite tadang salang, lewen kebe, am rasa keta one awak le lako salag daat, am darap tana, kolang leso. Somba ite, neho reweng dami ngasang anak, porong nggolong one gong situ, nggoling one toni, one waes lau one lesos sale. Reis lami ite, ho'o tuak curu dami, kepok. (video transcript 04)

Excerpt 5

- SM : Yo...ema Uskup ata hiang agu momang lami. Eta lawang ema Pastor Paroki wa lawang ami weki serani one mai pitu wilayah. Ho'o tite cai one sai tua du ranga ami anak serani. Curu tite lami. Cala manga lo'o lolos, napu wa'i kut cai ce ami weki serani Paroki Golo Dukal. Kosos lo'o situ, capus napung situ. Porong cai dite ema Uskup ce Paroki Golo Dukal tiba le senang nai, kut titong agu sembeng ami anak serani ce Paroki Golo Dukal. Yo...ema Uskup toe reweng kanang, kepok. (Video transcript 05).
- Excerpt 6
- SM: Yo...ite ema Uskup, ai ite poli na panggal one gala kut di'an lonto lodok, kaen bongkok latang te umat serani one tana Manggarai Ite, wan ata koe etan ata tua, ulun le ho'on ce Paroki Datak Kecamatan Welak. Neho tendeng tuka mese, neho joreng tuka koe ai manga adak

kole one tana ho'o ga. Ite...kapu lami tite neho wua pau, naka lami ite neho wua nangka. Ho'o tuak kapu dami aguk manuk. Tesuan ite, mai lau mai Jakarta dite lelap eta awang lako wa tana, toe rantang lite darap tana, toe asi leso walis ai mesen nuk ai one tana ho'o. Ite... aram do lako dite lau mai Jakarta haeng ho'o ce'e., lolong wae roho dite, inung wae bajang, manga moeng one mose dite, beret one celi. Manga ngasang ringing tis, nepo leso, ngoel loke, dango ranga. Ho'o keta manuk kut sonda taung situ, Te saka taung darap tana. Porong ite kali ga jojong one gong ata toe di'an, one waes lau, one lesos sale. Ho'o manuk kut oke taungs ata toe di'a hitu. Porong ite kali geal, reha-rahat, tepo-tapung jalalah mose dite, sae bombang mose dite. Wake caler nggerwan, watu pogor onto dite. Rana rembong kin woko lelo kut di'an lonto leok kaeng bongkok one tana Manggarai. Kepok. (Video transcript 07)

The excerpts (1 to 6) demonstrate the instances of the spoken text conveyed on the ritual of welcoming the different honored guests. The guests are the group of members of the regional house of representatives in the Province of East Nusa Tenggara, vice head of regency, bishop, the ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, and governor. These guests were on the official visit for various activities in different places, namely in village, church, school, and the soccer field. The guests were the distinguished people who deserved the cultural welcoming from the educational institution. The spoken text was uttered by the spokesman on the ritual of *curu meka* at the front yard of the school. It is clearly seen that some utterances in terms of words, sentences, and particular expressions show the host's politeness in Manggaraian language and culture. Two types of politeness strategies were resorted on the ritual, namely positive politeness strategy and off-the record politeness strategy. Positive politeness strategy was predominantly used to maintain positive face of the guests for appreciation, honor, friendliness as well as to minimize the risk of face-threating act. Preserving positive face of the hearer is the main orientation of applying positive politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The spokesman attempt to build a good relationship and solidarity.

Off-the record politeness strategy was also applied in the ritual texts with the purpose to express honor and gratitude, sincerity, and rejoice. Using this strategy avoids expressing their feelings and honor overtly which can be considered as "exaggeration". In this regard, both positive politeness strategy and off-the record maximize the benefit to the guests by applying three maxims of modesty, generosity, and approbation. It is also an indication of how the spokesman protected the face (self-image) of the guests in order that they felt honored and convenient. Therefore, it is crucial to accounting for the face of hearer on the cultural events or rituals (Darong et al., 2022; Kadar & House, 2021; Menggo et al., 2021).

The application of the two politeness strategies were explicitly observed in the use of politeness markers. In the case of positive politeness strategy, the markers are

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personal pronoun (ite) and honorifics (ema, mori). Personal pronoun (ite) is the polite form referring to person. In context of the ritual, it is appropriate to show a respect because the guests are the distinguished persons in a high position. This finding is related to the previous study conducted by (Semana & Menggo, 2022), regarding the use of the polite marker *ite*. The other polite markers exploited in the ritual text of welcomin a guest is honorifics. In the view of Brown & Levinson (1987), the honorifics is the grammatical encoding referring to social status between the interactants in a communicative act. In this regard, the social status of the participants is manifested in honorifics. In the ritual text, the honorific *ema, mori* were employed to show high respect and honor to the guest in a distinguished social status and rank. This finding is in line with the theory of honorifics applied in the studies by Andini (2021), who argued that honorifics serves a paramount role for respect, familiarity, and formality in society depending on age, social hierarchy, and rank.

In the ritual, the spokesman conveyed politeness in an implicit way or in an indirect manner. It was exploited in metaphor of fruits (plant), physical appearnace, parts of body, and parts of the house. The cases are stated in the instances (1) *neho tendeng tuka mese, neho joreng tuka koe,* (2) *nai ca anggit tuka ca leleng.* (3) *naka neho wua nangka, kapu neho wua pau lami ite, naka neho wua pandang* and (4) *husur lutur hamar wancang kamping, dan (5) te Kapu lami mendi ema lobo pa'a, koe mose merik weki.* The metaphorical expressions are the polite forms commonly used by the Manggaraian speech community to designate modesty and sincerity. Despite other studies indicate the intricacy of the cultural metaphors that leads to overpoliteness and irony, they have the prominent roles in conveying cultural values(Menggo & Ndiung, 2021; Sanjaya & Rahardi, 2021).

4. Conclusion

Politeness is a social phenomenon which is essentially required for social interaction and cultural practices. The realization of politeness showcases a high variety and complexity in customary life and social contexts. The Manggaraian speech community has many indigeneous rituals, among is the ritual of welcoming a guest. In this ritual, politeness plays a key role. Based on the data analysis of several selected texts, some crucial points to be considered in understanding the application of politeness strategy. First, politeness is an integrated element that shapes the ritual of welcoming a guest. Second, politeness of the ritual encapsulates cultural values of Manggaraian

speech community. The root of the politeness is local culture-based. Third, the social and cultural meaning of politeness is showing honor, respect, friendliness, and solidarity. Fourth, politeness is realized in positive politeness strategy and off-the record. Personal pronoun (ite), honorifics, downtoner (yo), and metaphorical expressions are the primary features of politeness strategy in the ritual of welcoming a guest.

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