

Indirectness as A Communication Style of Javanese Women in Making Offers in Public Spaces

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Abstract

Language usage patterns are a reflection of society and gender-based social divisions. In the modern era, the situation of woman language will differ due to the social situation. The effects of modernity and globalization, which are ever more prevalent, are felt in many facets of human existence and become more apparent over time particularly when it relates to cultural and linguistic shifts in gendered communication. This study aims to uncover how Javanese women communicate in offering their 'services' in public areas. This study highlights how commercial sex workers offer their services near Surabaya City. Data obtained from real communication when the subjects who have been offering their service. What language style applied from five subjects. This study concludes that the Javanese women speakers applied the Javanese language to different levels. While the use of Indonesian language in their communication as an alternative language for Javanese speakers to choose words or phrases in order to prevent language speech level misuse and speakers' inability to use the proper Javanese stylistic level, particularly when speaking to younger subjects. These findings emphasize the need for further exploration of the cultural and linguistic dynamics in Javanese society, particularly in professions that involve nuanced communication. This study also opens pathways for future research into the sociological and linguistic dimensions of language use in other sensitive or stigmatized professions, broadening the scope of inquiry within social humanities.

Keywords: *communication style; gender- based communication; indirectness, Javanese women; language usage pattern*

1. INTRODUCTION

In social life, every human being, both male and female, certainly wants to communicate well. In addition, in sociolinguistic studies, language is interpreted as a system of symbols, in the form of sounds, arbitrary, productive, dynamic, diverse and humane. One of the means by which people might satisfy their wants in life is communication. Baskaran (2005, p. 1) asserts that the term "communication" is broad and encompasses a number of elements related to how people convey messages. Additionally, communication entails two or more individuals using language to code and encrypt communications for one another (Megah, 2009, p. 1).

Language can be classified according to the gender of the speaker. Discussing gender is linked to feminism as a movement that aims to fight for gender equality between men and women (Siregar, 2024, p.135). Gender-based social divisions and the reflection of society can be portrayed from the language usage patterns. Numerous linguists undertook studies in the 1960s and 1970s to examine how men and women developed language differently and to identify the characteristics of women's language (Tahir et al, 2022). The important emphasis of this study is the linguistic disparity that women experience in society. Lakoff then broadly categorizes this language imbalance into two kinds. Examine women's language usage first.

Second, the manner they are commonly referred to in English tends to devalue women's social standing.

On the other hand, Tannen (1990) adds that several interesting points about gender and language use theory, which has an intention of speaking, men are competitive and intend to build individual status. Women's language is very interesting to study in terms of their social position. Their language can express feminism which is definitively a social movement and ideology that aims to achieve gender equality by fighting for women's rights (Hartini et al., 2021; Nurfaizina & Suprpto, 2021; Setiawan, 2016).

Language is a reflection of the speakers. One can guess the identity such as origin, character, and behavior of the person they are talking to from the language they use (Tahir et al., 2022, p.47). Likewise with men and women who are two different people. Accordingly, discussing gender has been a controversial issue since it was first introduced in the late 90s. Many have the perception that gender is a method by which women want to be like men in terms of work and responsibility. Therefore, since several years ago many people have talked about and been influenced by the term gender equality where women demand their rights to be the same as those obtained by men. However, lately this term has been rarely heard because little by little women have caught up with men's positions, especially in politics. Meanwhile, it cannot be denied that both men and women literally have their own abilities and expertise that certainly cannot be exchanged. Studying women's language, particularly that of individuals in the sex work profession, is noteworthy due to their distinct communication style (Saputro, 2016).

Studying communication style is also relevant to identifying social structure. All alterations to a society's social institutions that have an impact on its social structure, such as shifts in attitudes, values, and group behavior patterns, are referred to as social change (Soekanto, 2001). In this case, specific groups may identify themselves using specific language such as register. Holmes (2013) defined register as the language used by individuals who form a group based on shared interests or occupations, or the language used in contexts related to such groups. It also includes the language used by sexual workers.

In the modern era, the situation of woman language will differ due to the social situation. The effects of

modernity and globalization, which are ever more prevalent, are felt in many facets of human existence and become more apparent over time (Sagala et.al, 2020). The modernization process tends to move more swiftly if people or communities are receptive to new ideas (Rosana, 2012). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the English phrases used by the online prostitution community in closed social media groups. It particularly concerns the phrases used during negotiation. Negotiation is one of the various purposes for which language has been employed. For negotiating objectives, commercial sex workers have used unique and rhetorical language (Ogdoc-Gascon et. al., 2015).

This study examines Javanese speakers particularly in a brothel area near Surabaya City. Prostitution came due to high demand to use their service. Prostitution as a name given to an act in which several people are involved in an event. An act in which a woman gives herself to have sex with the opposite sex who expects payment in the form of money or other forms. Prostitution is a social problem in community life, because it harms safety, peace, physical and spiritual prosperity. The term WTS, which is now frequently used to refer to Commercial Sex Workers (CSWs), refers to someone who sells sexual services (Siregar, 2015).

Prostitution is the practice of giving up one's job to engage in sexual activity in exchange for payment. (Chusnafariha, 2017). This also becomes something real that must be addressed immediately when connected with the perspective of religion and the traditions of ethnic groups in Indonesia (Winarso, 2015). The low standard of people's economic lives is the root cause of poverty. (Munawaroh 2010). the people who attract profit here is the pimps (Caswanto, 2016).

The language that the prostitutes use is examined in this study. According to Lyon (1997, p. 176), the language used by the prostitute has the power to evoke a certain emotional response in the listener. Since Fauzi (2000) observed that a group of Javanese prostitutes in Surakarta used registers and tended to use specific codes that are understood only by them and the people who use their services to disguise and protect themselves, this study attempts to investigate the language's capacity. Based on the justification given

above, this study examines the communication tactics employed by prostitutes while discussing or doing negotiation concerning the provision of their services with their clients.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This study uses a qualitative analysis method with a descriptive approach which aims to identify and analyze the use of language style of the Javanese women in communication. This analysis focuses on the elements of language style used by the Javanese women in offering their 'sex service' to the clients.

2.2. Data Collection

The data collection was obtained from the brothels area near Surabaya City. To cover their privacy, all of the real names of the research participants is confidential. Seven prostitutes who worked at a low-cost brothel in Surabaya served as the research subjects because, as of late, the Surabaya city government has outlawed and shut down several brothels near Surabaya city. The subjects were five prostitutes.

2.3 Data Analysis

The recordings were used in the data collection process. There was no training or direction given to the subjects; their talks or conversations happened naturally. They were instructed to continue as they typically do with their prospective customers while hiding the voice-activated tape recorder, which has already been turned on, on their bodies. With consent from both the individuals and their caregivers, the audio recordings of the conversations were made. Since it would be challenging to get consent to record on camera because the subjects would not want their faces captured, audio recording was selected.

3. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The clients were the target audience for the offer. As a result, the client had to say anything or react to the offer in a suitable manner. At the initial stage, the hearer may feel happy and or unhappy with the offer made. Choice of words therefore plays an important role in making the offer effectively.

The participants also disclosed that if customers argue for a price below the market (standard price) supplied, it indicates that they are from a lower socioeconomic

background. As the subjects start talking to the potential clients, observations of them in action showed that they do, in fact, validate or modify the conclusions drawn from the preliminary evaluations of the clients' social position.

Datum 1 [smile]*Mampir Mas?* [just have a visit, bro?]

Datum 2 *Mas pinarak mas....?*[smile - just have a visit, bro?]

Datum 3 *Pak monggo...*[smile – Sir, let's take a rest]

Datum 4 *Mas Servis kayak nDolly?* [Sir, the service like in nDolly (Big Brothel)]

Datum 5 *Mau minum atau istirahat?* [Will you drink or take a rest?]

This study explores how Javanese women serving as "sexual service providers" navigate communication with their clients, revealing the pervasive use of euphemisms in their interactions. The findings indicate that euphemisms and indirectness are deeply embedded in Javanese society and culture, reflecting broader societal norms of politeness and harmony in communication (Geertz, 1960). Javanese women in this context strategically employ these linguistic tools to maintain smooth interactions and avoid potential conflict or discomfort, which is particularly critical in the sensitive realm of negotiation and service provision.

Moreover, the study highlights the adaptive use of language among these women, who alternate between Javanese and Indonesian to address challenges such as speech level appropriateness and stylistic conventions. This shift enables them to navigate linguistic hierarchies and prevent misunderstandings, particularly when engaging with younger clients or those unfamiliar with the nuanced levels of Javanese speech. As Errington (1988) suggests, such linguistic adaptability is a hallmark of cultures with intricate speech-level systems, demonstrating the interplay between language and social hierarchy.

The findings underscore the importance of further interdisciplinary research into the sociolinguistic, pragmatic, and sociological dimensions of language use in this context. By examining the intersection of language, culture, and social practices, this study contributes to a richer understanding of how cultural

values shape communication strategies, particularly in professions that demand nuanced interaction. As Holmes (2013) emphasizes, linguistic practices often reflect underlying cultural norms and societal structures, making this a fertile area for further investigation.

Future research could expand on these insights by exploring the language of Javanese women in similar professions through lenses such as pragmatics, cultural studies, and cross-cultural communication. The implications extend beyond the specific context of this study, offering valuable lessons for understanding language use in other sensitive or stigmatized professions. This approach could deepen our comprehension of how language mediates cultural and social norms, ultimately informing practices in language teaching, cultural awareness, and intercultural communication.

4. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

This study concerned how the Javanese women served 'the sexual clients. The results found prostitutes frequently employ euphemisms in their work. Javanese prostitutes use euphemisms, and indirectness is ingrained in Javanese society. The styles were aimed to maintain the good communication between the both parties (the clients and the subjects), which is referred to as euphemism in negotiations. Therefore, the idea that communication is culturally connected and that people from a certain culture, especially Javanese culture.

This study concludes that the Javanese women speakers applied the Javanese language to different levels. While the use of Indonesian language in their communication as an alternative language for Javanese speakers to choose words or phrases in order to prevent language speech level misuse and speakers' inability to use the proper Javanese stylistic level, particularly when speaking to younger subjects.

This study still has a lot of chances to be studied from various types of research, particularly in social humanities. Therefore, the writers recommend studying prostitutes' languages from different perspectives, such as sociology, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, etc. The findings of this study have significant implications for understanding the

intersection of language, culture, and social practices in Javanese society. The use of euphemisms and indirectness by Javanese women in the context of serving clients highlights the deep-rooted cultural norms of maintaining politeness and harmony in communication. This demonstrates how cultural values are embedded in linguistic practices, particularly in sensitive contexts such as negotiation and service interactions. Additionally, the study sheds light on the adaptive use of language, as speakers shift between Javanese and Indonesian to navigate challenges related to speech level appropriateness and stylistic choices.

These findings emphasize the need for further exploration of the cultural and linguistic dynamics in Javanese society, particularly in professions that involve nuanced communication. The study's results can inform sociolinguistic and pragmatic research, contributing to a broader understanding of how language reflects and reinforces cultural values in diverse social contexts. Furthermore, these insights can be applied in fields such as cross-cultural communication, language teaching, and cultural studies to foster better comprehension of the intricate relationship between language and societal norms.

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