

GREETING STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY JAVANESE PEOPLE

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Abstract

Javanese has been becoming fruitful sources of data especially in Pragmatic field. However, only few people have concerned the greeting strategies they employed. This study is aimed at investigating the greeting strategies employed by Javanese people in Mangunsari village, Semarang, Indonesia. As utterances and verbal communication should be interpreted based on the socio-cultural background, Javanese cannot be separated from the concept of Javanese culture like friendliness. As a result, the verbal communication they uttered might have more meaning than the said. Therefore, this study also attempts to trace the implicature they intent. This paper examines how greeting strategies are manifested and conveyed within the major framework of the Javanese culture. This study is about socio-cultural pragmatics in which utterances are discussed in relation to their situation and cultural background which support them. The data are in the form of dialogue between Javanese which does not show any different social status among the interlocutors. The data of this research were collected by recording and note taking (for the parts in which recording is not possible). The data are aimed at generating the strategies used by Javanese (in Mangunsari village, Semarang, Indonesia) to maintain harmony among the members. Finally, the data are examined from general theory of implicature and the Javanese culture concept (friendliness). This study provides important findings showing that Javanese tend to greet others by employing a particular way which differ from common ways of greeting. They employed the utterances to imply their friendliness as a harmony and relation maintenance and to avoid the sense of arrogant and individualistic.

Keywords: greeting strategies, friendliness, implicature, harmony

INTORODUCTION

People use language in various ways to interact with others in their vernacular. They use language not only to exchange information but also to sustain harmony and well-established relationship in their society. Especially in Javanese culture, greeting people is one of the ways to maintain harmony and good neighborhood. The

writer believes that there is something unique in the ways how Javanese people greet each other in order to maintain harmony and relationship. This paper attempts to uncover that phenomenon in order to finding out the uniqueness of Javanese culture especially in terms of greeting strategies.

Strategies provide rich sources of pragmatic phenomena in the

Javanese culture has become one of fruitful sources of uniqueness especially in pragmatic field. Scholar like Geert (1976) had carried out a study involving Javanese people. He found that pretention is needed; feelings, wants, and opinions need to be hidden to achieve harmony and peace. It, somehow, is quite different from other societies when they attempt to maintain harmony and relationship among their members. In one hand, Euro Americans, for instance, accept more white lies when sustaining harmony among them (Mealy et. al., 2007). On the other hand, German and Polish prefer honesty as the sign of friendship (see Meabauer, 2005).

Another study concerning Javanese has also been carried out by Sukarno (2015). However, he did not deal with greeting strategies but the strategies employed by Javanese in responding compliments. There are five strategies employed namely (1) disagreeing and denigrating, (2) disagreeing and raising a question, (3) accepting and turning back, (4) accepting and giving explanation, and (5) accepting only, or accepting and offering. Apparently, the interpretation drawn from this study cannot be separated from the concept of Javanese such as *andhap ashor* (lowering oneself while exalting the others) and *tanggap ing sasmita* (being sensitive with the hidden meaning). This study also employed the same paradigm in interpreting the utterances elicited by the speakers.

This paper will investigate the way how Javanese people greet each other and try to discover what their intents are behind their greetings. In order to uncover the real intent of the speaker, we will be dealing

with implicature behind what the speakers express. Implicature is the speaker's intent to convey more than he said (Yule, 1996, 40).

Varieties of societies seem to differ in many ways in using language including how they greet each other. I have found that Javanese people have uniqueness in greeting others. This uniqueness is, somehow, very prominent to be explored and exposed in order to reveal the characteristic of Javanese people in using language especially when greeting. In addition, studies on pragmatics field concerning Javanese culture seem to be less frequent to carry out by Indonesian researcher. There are several studies on it but mostly they are carried out by foreign researchers. Additionally, the writer believes that if the researcher is one of the members of the society, it will be easier for the researcher to get the data and interpret them in order to reveal the possible findings.

METHODS

This study will be employing actual heard utterances collected by the researcher from his own experience living in a Javanese society in Mangunsari Village, Gunungpati, Semarang city, Indonesia. The researcher utilized voice recorder and note for the data which are impossible to be recorded. Then, the researcher analyzed the utterances according to how the Javanese people greet each other and what expression they employed when greeting. Then, we will try to trace the implicature behind the expressions.

The framework of this study can be illustrated by the following figure:



Figure 1. Research Methods

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section will display several actual heard utterances in dialogues by Javanese people involving greeting. We will mostly look at what expressions used by the Javanese to greet others and try to investigate the relevance of those expressions to be employed as greetings.

After that, we will also attempt to trace what implicatures derived from those expressions.

The first dialogue occurred between two Javanese people.

Situation: The person A was cutting the grass in front of his house and the person B was passing the path near the house. Then, the person B greeted A.

A: (*Busily cutting the grass*)

B: **Resik-resik Mas?**

(*Doing cleaning Mr.?*)

A: Njeh Bu. Saking tindak pundi?

(*I am. Where are you from?*)

B: Saking dalem e Mbah bekel mriku.

(*From Mbah Bekel's house there*)

A: Oh ngoten.

(*Oh I see*)

The speaker B tried to greet A but with different way and different expression. Most people will greet others by saying good morning, or other expressions of greeting. However, in this case, the speaker B performed differently. Although B has already known that A was cutting the grass, meaning that he was doing cleaning, B insisted on asking *Doing cleaning Mr.?* which is a rhetorical question; question which does not need any answer as both speaker and hearer have understood the answer.

The implicature derived from what B expressed to greet A is that it is just a lips-surface to maintain relationship and har-

mony between B and A as they are neighbors. The speaker clarified as follows:

Researcher: Kenging nopo Bu kok kedah tanglet ngoten? Kan mpun ngertos menawi Mas A kan saweg resik-resik.

(*Why did you still ask that Madam? Actually, you have known that Mr. A was cutting the grass cleaning his yard.*)

B: Nggeh kajeng e mboten ketingal sombong Mas. Kan nggeh tetanggan niku kedah saling sapa lan perhatian ngoten.

(*I don't want to look arrogant. As neighbors, we should greet and concern each other*)

It was evidenced that the implicature Mrs. B brought is the sign to maintain harmony and relationships between the speaker and the hearer, although it is just a lips-surface.

The second dialogue also occurred between two Javanese people.

Situation: They were attending an invitation at one of the people's houses on Sunday. A was just coming and shaking his hand with B.

A: (*shaking hand with B*)

B: **Prei Mas?**

(*Having holiday Mr.?*)

A: Njeh Mas, prei.

(*I am. It's holiday.*)

B: Monggo pinarak.

(*Please have a seat*)

A: Oh njeh, matur nuwun.

(*Yes, thank you*)

The speaker B also greeted A in an interesting way. Instead of using expression of greeting, he greeted B by saying *Having holiday Mr.?* Although he had already known that it was Sunday on which people are having holidays, he insisted on uttering it as the sign of friendliness and harmony maintenance. After being clarified, he stated the following:

Researcher: Mas, kenging nopo kok tanglet mekaten? Kan mpun sami-sami nger-tos menawi dinten Ahad punika prei?

(Mr. B, why did you ask that? We did understand that Sunday is holiday)

B: Njeh mboten nopo-nopo Mas, tanglet mawon kalih kagem nyambut mawon. Kan kaliyan tiyang sanes kedah ramah.

(Yes, nothing Mr. I just ask him to welcome him. We should be friendly with others.)

The above evidence shows that Javanese people tend to establish friendliness among their members of society in purpose to maintain harmony and good relationship. Although they should utter something not significant and prominent for both, just for lips-surface, that was the sign of the effort to omit the sense of arrogance and individualism among the members.

The third dialogue took place between two Javanese people.

Situation: A Javanese person A was sitting in his veranda enjoying the time while drinking tea and having some biscuits. Then, his neighbor, a Javanese person B, passed through a path in front of them.

A: *(sitting while drinking tea and having biscuits)*

B: sante-sante Mas? (Having leisure time Mr.?)

A: Njeh Mba, monggo pinarak? *(Yes Ms. Have a visit please?)*

B: Njeh Mas. *(Yes.) (While keeping on walking and passing him).*

Let's see what happened in the dialogue above. When speaker B greeted A, she performed a unique expression. She did not employ the expression of greeting commonly known. She, actually, had known that A was having leisure time sitting in the veranda while having tea and biscuits. However, B insisted on asking him *Having leisure time Mr.?* The researcher believed that

the speaker B was not just asking him. She had an implicature behind her utterance.

After being clarified, she stated the following explanation:

Researcher: Bu, kenging nopo tanglet mekaten? Ibu kan sampun ngertos menawi Mas e punika saweg sante-sante teng ngajeng nggriyo punika.

Why did you ask that Mam? You had known that he was having leisure time in the veranda.

B: Njeh panci adat e mpun ngoten e Mas. Bapak lan Ibu kulo riyin nggeh ngoten. Menawi wonten tiyang saweg ngaso teng tegalan ngoten, nggeh tanglet saweg ngaso Pak? Nggeh kagem nyapa kalih kajeng e mobten ketingal sombong Mas.

(That is the Javanese culture Mr. My father and mother did too. If there are farmers having a break in the rice field, we greet them by asking "Having a break Sir" It aims to greet and avoid looking arrogant.)

It was evidenced that what B expressed to greet A has implicature. Although the uttered question was a rhetorical question meaning she asked something she already knew the answer, she intended to convey another meaning. She intended to greet him in order to show her friendliness as well as to maintain harmony and relationship between her and the hearer.

CONCLUSION

Javanese people employed a particular style of expression to greet others, instead of using common style of greeting. The given expression contains implicature to show the speakers' intent to express their friendliness, to maintain harmony and good relationship, as well as to omit the sense of arrogance and individualism among the members of society.

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