



Power of Social Class and Its Impact to Language Use

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Abstract

The aim of this paper was to know how social class particularly nobility affected the language use within the people of *Sukadana* village. *Sukadana* Village is a place in which most of the people are belonging to nobility. The phenomena in the society dealing with language use and the culture of society in term of how they treat the language become the interest of the discussion in this paper. Research design is qualitative descriptive. The data gathered which by means of interview and voice recording. The data was analyzed by the way of transcribing and describing such as words, sentences, and utterances. Furthermore, every theory relates to the topic was selected to support the idea. In the daily life, the power of social class and the manifestation of nobility have an impact to the language within people of *Sukadana* Village

Keywords: Language; Power; Social Class

Introduction

As a tool of communication, language plays an important role in humans' life. Thomas (2008: 5) stated that language as a tool of communication to accomplish the aims. It means that one can get what is being intended by using language to express it. Language can be explained as the scheme of communication consists of codes and symbols which are used by humans to pile up, to get back, to put in order structure and to correspond knowledge and experience. Furthermore, language is a system of communication between individuals and social phenomenon.

Social contact and language is linked together. It is depending on one another in which there are numerous people there are required to use language as a tool of communication. Carrasquillo and Rodriguez in Khutso (2012: 4) stated that language is considered as a connected element of life and a connected element of the social system and societal groups. Indeed, this is a good value to realize that language and society are truly a kind of mutuality correlation. How we could do socialization without language and how we could use our language without any society exist.

Language and social contact is also about how we use language to relate to other people within our communities. Each situation that we find ourselves in every day requires us to use language in a subtly different way, depending on where we are, whom we are with, what we hope to achieve within that

situation, the equipment we are using and how we want others to react to us. At a classroom where we try to depict ourselves as a knowledgeable person so that our lecturer impressed on us, we give the impression to be talkative in giving response instead of silent person. Moreover, At a meeting in which we wish to project an image of ourselves as a confident and knowledgeable person in order to impress our boss, we are likely to be more formal and self-assured than when trying to book a holiday with a travel agent or when calling for an emergency plumber in the middle of the night. Managing the vast range of social interactions that we all engage in sounds like a complex task but, although we sometimes make mistakes, we usually do get it right.

Some factors such as education, occupation, income, etc. bring individuals into social classes and then have an effect toward linguistic features are used by each group. However, there is a condition in which people are divided into some categories in term of language use that it is nobility. The stereotype of nobility in *Sasak* culture polite language is considered as the only language that should be used in the daily life communication. Therefore, there is an interesting social phenomenon happen in *Sukadana* Village. *Sukadana* village is a village in which most of the societies are belonging to nobles. *Sukadana* is located in kecamatan Terara east Lombok.

Based on elaboration above, this paper concerned on how the power of social class influences the language use. To specify the case, however, the questions of this research were: does nobility in the society affect the language use between people? How does the verbal communication style among the people within Sukadana village?

Methodology

The method of this paper uses descriptive method. The result of the data analyzed in descriptive forms such as words, sentences, and utterances because this paper described the communication style of the people of Sukadana village in order to know the power of social class and its impact to the language.

Result and Discussion

From the observation and analysis of transcript, it was found that the social class affected the language use among the people of Sukadana village. The language use affected the communication style of the people between *menak*¹ and *menak*, and between *menak* and *dasan*² people.

Communication Style Between Menak and Menak

This part presents the finding on observation and the interview. The language use between *menak* and *menak* is determined by the scale of the nobility they belong to. In other words, the higher a person is in a nobility scale the more people respect to that person in the case of communication style. Therefore, the language use must be polite language (*base alus*³). This following is the example of conversation between IR and MR in which IR is younger than MR.

IR : *sampun pelungguh medahar miq?*
Have u had your lunch?

¹ *Menak* is people belonging to nobility

² *Dasan* is people belongin to non-nobility people

³ *Base alus* is polite language

MR : *nggih, sampun tang mangan.*
Yes, I have had my lunch

Indeed, the conversation above shows that people among *menak* environment use *base alus* in communication. When someone who is belonging to lower scale talk to person who is belonging to upper scale, he/she must use *base alus* at all words of his/her sentences. However, the response of the upper scale person must not use *base alus* at all the words of his/her sentence.

In term of age and position in the society, the language use is also interesting to be analyzed and the finding shows that age is not affect the language use. In other words, the nobility scale still the main power of choosing language. In addition, the position in the community such as chairman of village does not affect the upper scale must use *base alus*.

Education, occupation, position in government institution does not affect the language use in the mean of respecting the person. In *menak* family the rule on how they treat the others by using language is determined by DUK (*Deret Urutan Keluarga*). Mr. Ir. is a family member of *menak* and he is the youngest among the children. Mr. Ad is a member of people representative and he is one of the vice leaders. Indeed, in term of occupation he is belonging to upper class and people must respect to him and when talking to him people must use *base alus*. Nevertheless, when Irwan is going home to Sukadana he is treated as the lower caste by the other family members who are older than him. This is the way how DUK determine the language use within *menak* family.

Communication Style Between Menak and Dasan

Sukadana people are living in the peaceful and friendly life. Even though the stereotype of *menak* is the people who must be respected which may create the asymmetry causing the *dasan* people (non-*menak*) afraid of communicating with them, they always try to make the harmonic relationship.

The communication style between person of *menak* and person of *dasan* is not the same with the style that of between *menak* and *menak*. Person of *dasan* which is categorized as the community bore the nobility has to speak by using *base alus*. On the other hands, the person of *menak* has the right and access whether to use *base alus* or not. The following is the example of conversation between *Amaq Amat* (AA) and *Mamiq Andi* (MA).

AA :	<i>Nurge,</i> Excuse, Excuse me, sir!	<i>Miq!</i> Sir	
MA :	<i>Mbe-e</i> Where Where will you go?	<i>Leiq?</i> To go?	
AA :	<i>Tang</i> I I go to rice field.	<i>lumbar</i> go	<i>jok bangket</i> to field
MA :	<i>Nggih,</i> yes	<i>silaq!</i> please	

Yes, please!

The example above shows how the language is treated under the influence of social status particularly in term of nobility. According to the interview with some people honorably respect as a *pemangku adat* of Sukadana village, they realized that people of *dasan* (non-*menak*) tend to use *base alus* when they are communicating with *menak* even though it is not a must to use that language. Then, what can be analyzed from the example of the conversation above?

From the conversation it is known that AA is passing house of MA on the way of reaching his house. Since AA is non-*menak*, he uses *alus* language. Nurge is marked in non-*menak* environment. The word use in non-*menak* is *tabeq* instead of *nurge*. When saying *nurge* it is aimed to show the respect and it is considered as polite language however the *menak* respond is using ordinary language '*mbe-e leiq?*' and thus it is acceptable. It does not mean that MA does not respect AA in this setting. At the end of the conversation, MA closed it by saying '*nggih, silaq!*' In reality, this is the way how MA pays his respect to AA. He may say '*aoq aloh*' instead of '*nggih, silaq!*' and it is acceptable but as the mean of creating the harmony of life he tends to use *base alus*.

The utterances that AA said in the conversation without any forcing coming from that family it is manifested that the social status affect the language use. In addition, someone give the respect if we respect the others and thus in the means of harmony life we must respect each other. Language plays and vital role in this sense so that we must keep aware of using language. No matter how high your position in governmental institution, no matter how welfare you are politeness and respecters still must be kept.

Another way to analysis social class and its power affect the language by attempting SPEAKING Model by Hymes (1996): 1) Setting and Scene: Setting is related to when and where the speech act and to the physical situation of a speech act. Scene is the "psychological setting" or "cultural definition" of setting for instance the range of formality and sense seriousness; 2) Participants are closely related to the hearers or the audiences who involve in the speech situation; 3) Ends refer to the purposes, goals, and outcomes of the speech act; 4) Act Sequence is defined as the order and form speech appears; 5) Key is considered as indication that determine the "tone, manner, or spirit" of the speech act; 6) Instrumentalities related to shapes and styles of speech; 7) Norms deal with social rules leading the event and the participants' actions and reaction; 8) Genre is linked to the kind of speech act or event.

In response to the SPEAKING Model and its relation to the social class and its power influence the language, it can be used to show the impact: 1) Setting and Scene: It shows us that different setting affects one's language. A governor has a power in the context of government and it is the highest position in the society. On the other hand, the power of governor cannot be used in the context of family life; 2) Participants: a governor may use high tone language in the front of his staffs. He also has power to force his staff to obey his command. However, when talking to president, he has no power to use high tone language because his class is lower than president's; 3) Ends: a governor uses the high tone language to show dissatisfactions. The language implies that he is a distinct person; 4) Act Sequence; 5) Key is related to the intonation of language. In the case of government context, president has power to use high tone language to the minister and other subordinates but minister and other subordinates has no power to do so; 6) Instrumentalists in the example of people from lower class talk to people who are upper class; they have a tendency to speak in form of polite language it is because the lower class has no power to use impolite language when talking to upper class; 7) Norms: it deals with language is affected culturally by the social class. For example, in Sasak society, *Sampun pelumguh medahar, miq?* language use when asking *Mamiq* about lunch. But when asking someone is not coming from *mamiq* or *raden* we say *uah de bekelor?* 8) Genre is linked to the kind of speech act or event. People from upper class will use his power to persuade other people. It is clearly seen in the context of campaign.

To sum up from the example above, different class determines the language use in speaking. Upper class tends to be respected by the lower class whether the class is based on the position in the society or the education or wealthy life. Since the lower class has no power in influencing society, the language use when talking to upper class is polite language and not high tone language.

Conclusion

Language as a tool of communication has an important role in the life of human. Human as a social creature need do an interaction one another because they live in the society. Language and the society are linked together. These two elements cannot be separated because mutually depending on each other.

According to Weber, social class is divided into upper class, middle class, and lower class. Upper class consists of people who are educated and wealth in life, middle class and lower class is related to people who are working manually and tend to uneducated. Social class affects the language of the society. It can be seen clearly in the society that language use by people who are educated is different from people who are not having experience in higher education.

The language use between *menak* and *menak* is determined by the scale of the nobility they belong to. In other words, the higher a person is in a nobility scale the more people respect to that person in the case of communication style. Therefore, the language use must be polite language (*base alus*).

Meanwhile, the communication style between person of *menak* and person of *dasan* is not the same with the style that of between *menak* and *menak*. Person of *dasan* which is categorized as the community bore the nobility has to speak by using *base alus*. On the other hands, the person of *menak* has the right and access whether to use *base alus* or not.

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