

Speech Level of Makeang Luar Language in Makeang Island

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Abstract

This research is about speech levels in Makeang Luar language, one of the two languages in Makeang. Some sources call this language as West Makeang language and others call it Moi language. However, in this research, the term used is the Makeang Luar language as used by the Language Agency, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology. Although language agency uses the word 'Makian', this research prefers the local term, Makeang. Thus the term used is Makeang language. As a language, Makeang Luar also has a speech level in daily conversation. This is related to local culture. Generally, the speech level in various languages is always related to the level of politeness, civility, or respect for someone, both in the context of position, kinship relations, or accessibility and geographic situations. Therefore, this research will describe the speech levels in Makeang Luar. By using a sociolinguistic theoretical framework, this research will descriptively describe Makeang Luar language which is the object of this research. The speech level in Makeang Luar language can be categorized into two, dimension of the vertical speech level and the horizontal speech level. Vertical speech level is related to differences in age, degree of position or social status of a person, and the relationship between husband and wife. Meanwhile, horizontal speech level is related to peer age and friendship or familiarity.

Keywords: *Makeang Luar Language, Speech Level.*

INTRODUCTION

Language Development and Development Agency, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of Indonesia notes that one of the languages on Makeang Island is Makeang Luar. The Makian word is locally called Makeang, either in the context of referring to the island, to the language, or to the people. For this reason, this research prefers to use Makeang language terms or phrases rather than Makian language.

Makeang Luar language is one of the two languages on the island of Makeang. Generally, the people of North Maluku refer to these two languages as Makeang Luar and Makeang Dalam Language. Makeang Luar language refers to language use on the west side of Makeang Island, while Makeang Dalam language refers to language use on the east side of Makeang Island. The geographical position of this speech area influences the use of other terms as used by Fokaaya, et al. (2014) in the book *Regional Languages in North Maluku*, namely West Makeang Language to denote Makeang Luar Language and East Makeang Language to denote Makeang Dalam Language. The use of the terms *Dalam* and *Luar* in the Makeang language is also due to the location of Makeang Island, which on the west side faces the open sea, while on the east side it faces Halmahera Island. Thus the western part is called *Luar/Outer* while the eastern part is called *Dalam/Inner*. At the local level, Makeang Luar language is known as *Moi Language* (Taha, 2019), while the Makeang Dalam language is known as *Taba Language*.

Makeang Island is one of the small islands in South Halmahera Regency in North Maluku Province. The diameter of this island is estimated to be approximately 10 kilometers (Ajam, 2022). Even though the island is small, this place is an area where two languages are spoken that do not understand each other at all, namely Makeang Luar language and Makeang Dalam language. Based on the results of dialectometric calculations from the Language Development and Development Agency, the Language Agency, Makian Luar is a language because the percentage of difference with other languages in North Maluku is around 94%-98%, such as the Makian Dalam language (Makeang) 94%; Buli language 97.5%; and Bacan language 95%.

Like languages in general, each language shows its own uniqueness, including in terms of speech level in these languages (Saputra, 2022; Sari et al., 2022; Sasabone et al., 2022; Rajab et al., 2022; Sujarwo et al., 2022). For example, in Javanese, to show the degree of politeness between people. The level of speech in Javanese is divided into three levels, namely *ngoko*, *madya*, and *karma*. The use of this level is related to the social situation in the area where the language is used. Fishman in Ramendra (2013: 278) explains that the level of speech as part of language variation was initially closely related to geographical areas which were called dialects or geographical dialects.

In Makeang Luar language, there are also language variations in the form of speech levels and are closely related to the social situation in Makeang Luar area or region. For example, a Makeang Luar person who calls or invites someone to eat will use the word 'fa' for the same age and use the word 'fajou' if the person is older than themselves. The use of these words conveys a message of politeness to older people

or indirectly pays respect to people whose age or position is considered higher than others.

By using sociolinguistic theory, this research will describe the level of speech in the Makeang Luar language. Descriptively, the results of this research will explain the vertical aspect of the level of speech used by the Makeang Luar community in language by referring to high or low position or rank, respect or disrespect between the speaker and the person being spoken to. In addition, this research will identify the horizontal dimension of speech level which refers to kinship relationships and the level of friendship between the speaker and the person being spoken to, as well as respect or disrespect.

Based on literature references, there are several studies that have specifically studied speech levels in certain languages. Meanwhile, specifically examining the speech level of the Makeang Luar language, no relevant literature has been found so far. The results of these studies are very helpful for research being carried out currently.

Research on speech levels presented by Poedjosoedarmo (1968) with the title Javanese speech levels was the first article in the literature for this research. This article describes the level of speech in Javanese society. In Javanese culture, people use three levels of speech, namely, ngoko, madyo, and Kromo. The first level, ngoko, is used in informal situations that do not really take politeness into consideration. This level is considered a rough variation of speech. Second level, madyo. The phrases used to refer to this level are semi-polite and semi-formal. This level is between the subtle and gross levels. It is a senior level. While the third level is chrome. The level that is considered the most polite and formal. This is the most subtle level in the level of Javanese speech.

Based on the conducted previous studies, Poedjosoedarmo's research became the main reference because conceptually, the results of this research actually provide a basic framework for research on the speech levels of regional languages in Indonesia. Even though it has been published a long time ago, the results of this research are still very relevant to be used as part of the literature in this research.

Next is Wilian's (2006) research with the title Speech Levels in Sasak and Javanese Languages. This research discusses the level of speech in the Sasak language, the language of the indigenous people of the island of Lombok, examining the style, meaning and some historical background from the level of speech. Based on the data, it appears that Sasak, like Javanese and Balinese, also contains low, medium, high and small vocabulary which is considered to have been borrowed from Javanese. However, the use of high and honorific variations is rarely heard in everyday Sasak conversation. In most instances, a high level of speech is spoken only among the so-called menak Sasak and surrounding areas. Therefore, there is a rejection of the idea that the level of Sasak speech is complicated and complex like Javanese even though Sasak only has a few high and honorable vocabularies known to the Sasak nobility.

METHOD

This research method uses descriptive methods. This method attempts to provide and interpret what is there, namely the speech level of the Makeang Luar language. Using this method, the researcher will provide characteristics of the speech level of the Makeang Luar language, the use of the Makeang Luar language speech level in relation to the degree of formality, and the degree of respect of the speaker towards the person he is speaking to. This research will be carried out in West Makeang, South Halmahera Regency, specifically in Sebele village, one of the villages that the Language Agency calls the Makeang Luar language area. Thus, the population at the Makeang Luar language speaking level are the Sibebei people in Makeang. However, Sibebei people who still have the ability to speak Makeang Luar in Ternate can be used to support research data.

The purpose of descriptive research, based on Gall, Gall, and Borg in Nassaji (2015), is to explain a phenomena and its traits. This study is more interested in what occurred than in how or why it occurred. As a result, data collection methods like observation and surveys are frequently used. While data collection techniques are based on by Moeljono, et al (1986), which are:

Interview

This technique is used to obtain information about the speaker's degree of respect for the person being spoken to, as well as to obtain information about the informant.

Back translation technique

This technique is used to obtain data by presenting sentences in Indonesian and then the informant is asked to translate them into Makeang Luar language. Efforts were made to ensure that informants could reveal the spoken level of the Makeang Luar language.

Fishing techniques without translation

In this technique, the researcher will ask the informant to tell about everything he knows (could be folklore) in Makeang Luar language. It is hoped that from this data, a pattern of speech levels in the Makeang Luar language will emerge.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Sociolinguistics Analysis

Politeness is one of the social rules of the Makeang Luar community. These politeness norms are manifested in various behaviors, one of which is language. The Makeang Luar community's awareness of this is very strong because politeness is not just a matter of respect and disrespect but also of maintaining relations between them. There is a process of breeding between people through the choice of words which in sociolinguistic studies is called the level of speech.

The level of speech in the Makeang Luar language can be seen from several social backgrounds, namely age, a person's status, kinship relationships and friendship relationships. If these social settings are grouped, there are two forms of speech levels, namely the vertical dimension of speech level and the horizontal dimension of speech level.

Vertical Dimension Speech Level

The vertical speech level is related to the high degree of respect for someone. In this speech level category, the speaker tries to show his politeness towards the interlocutor. The higher the level of speech, the more visible the level of politeness. This research found that vertical speech levels occur in speech events that are related to a person's age and status. Here is an example:

- (1) *Fi malofe i podo mo?*
Kamu lihat dia sudah datang?
Did you see he came?

This is an example of a sentence related to age differences. This sentence shows a younger speaker talking to an older person. In this sentence, it can be seen that the personal pronoun *fi* 'you' is a form of politeness used by younger speakers towards older speakers. *Fi* is a marker of politeness displayed by the speaker. If the example sentence above is reversed with the same sentence structure but the speaker is older and the interlocutor is younger, the personal pronoun is no longer *fi* but has changed to use the number 'you' as in example (2) below.

- (2) *No co i podo mo?*
Kamu lihat dia sudah datang?
Did you see he came?

Fi shown in example (1) and *no* in example (2) have the same meaning, namely you and are positioned as the second person singular. These two forms of personal pronouns will be used by speakers by adapting to the age of the speech partner. In general, the use of personal pronominal forms is due to the fact that the people who speak the Makeang Luar language still live homogeneously in villages so that they all still know each other and know who is older and who is younger.

If there is a speech event involving two speakers of the Makeang Luar language but they do not know each other because they live in different villages, for example, then the speakers will naturally identify the age of the speech partner to choose the level of speech that will be used. If the speaker believes the speech partner is younger then the personal pronoun used is *no*. Meanwhile, if the speaker is unsure about the age of the interlocutor or can confirm the age of the interlocutor, the speaker will use *fi* to show his politeness. At this point, the vertical level of speech also appears due to the lack of familiarity between the speakers.

Speech level is also seen in the choice of verbs. Younger speakers will choose verbs that show politeness towards older interlocutors. In example (1) above, the verb used is *malofe* 'see/see'. This word is a sign of politeness towards the conversation partner. The verb *malofe* will change if the person speaking to you is younger or the same age. In example (2) above, the speaker no longer uses the word *malofe* but uses the word *co* which means the same, namely to see. The word *co* is used because the interlocutor is younger or at least the same age.

Apart from age, speech level also applies to the social realm. Speech events that involve speech partners who have a certain social status, the choice of words used by the speaker, both in the form of personal markers and verbs, will be different

from those of speech partners who have ordinary social status. In the community in villages in Makeang Luar, socially the positions generally known are village head, priest, school principal and teachers. After the formation of a new sub-district, namely the West Makian sub-district which includes all villages that speak Makeang Luar, now there is a sub-district head as the highest position in the sub-district area. These positions are usually treated with more respect by choosing words that are at a higher level of speech or are considered more polite. Here is an example.

(3) *Ni fiya te no tobo te mina to do Om Pala, gola da kadu*

Kamu kesana mandi supaya kita ke Om Pala jangan sampai beliau tidur

You go take a shower so we can go to Or Pala before he gets to sleep

Example (3) above illustrates two domains of speech level, namely age and social status. This example sentence shows that the age of the speaker is younger than the age of the speaker. For this reason, the personal pronoun is *ni* 'you'. If the interlocutor is older than the speaker, then the personal pronoun used is *fi* 'you'.

Another marker that also shows the speaker's age is higher than the partner in the example sentence above is the verb *tobo* 'to bathe'. This word can be used because the age of the speaker is lower than the speaker. If the peer or interlocutor is older than the speaker, the verb used is *fayua* 'to bathe'.

In the social aspect, the position of the village chief is the person being discussed, the third person singular. Sentence (3) above, said *Om Pala*, is a term for village chief in villages in Makeang Luar. Generally, people do not usually call someone who is a village chief using that person's name but use the name of their position. *Pala* is short for chief (village). In sentence (3) above, it appears that the speaker and speech partner use sentences whose level of speech is considered very polite. A marker of politeness in referring to the village chief is the use of the word *kadu* 'sleep'. In the Makeang Luar community, the word *kadu* is a different level of polite speech from the word *tifi*. *Kadu* and *tifi* have the same meaning (sleep), but in their use, the word *kadu* implies a high level of politeness, while *tifi* is used at the same age, younger ages, and in friendship situations.

In sentence (3) above, it appears that there are three speech level relationships at once, namely 1) the relationship between the speaker and the speaker, 2) the relationship between the speaker and the village chief, and 3) the relationship between the speaker and the village chief. The first speech level relationship is related to age. The second relationship is related to social status because the speaker and the village chief are peers. Meanwhile, the third level of speech relationship is not simply related to social status but because the age of the speech partner is younger than the village chief. The use of the word *kadu* as a form of respect for the Village Chief by the speaker in his conversation with his interlocutor is based on considerations of the second and third relations above.

Vertical speech level can also be found in conversations between husband and wife. Status as a husband apparently also influences the level of speech in the Makeang Luar language. A husband who, even though he is younger than his wife,

in everyday conversation, a wife in Makeang Luar will use word choices that show politeness or respect for her husband. Here are the examples:

- (4) *Fi pasul safo ma i sidangi omo?*
Gigimu sudah sembuh?
Is your tooth healed?
- (5) *Fi teng eme te da bola-bola ta kamar da afe*
Kamu beri tahu mereka tidur di kamar depan
You tell them to sleep in the front room
- (6) *Fa buba eme te da fajou*
Kamu panggil dia supaya makan
You call him to eat

The three sentences above are a form of respect for the wife to her husband. Even though the wife's age is higher than the husband, the entire lexicon that appears in these sentences is an implication of the social life of the Makeang Luar community. For them, one measure of a wife's good behavior also includes the level of speech she uses when talking to her husband.

In example (4) above, the marker of politeness shown is the word *fi* 'you' and the use of the noun *pasul* 'tooth'. In this sentence, *fi* acts as a possessive pronoun or marker of possession. Its role is different from the use of *fi* in sentence (5) which functions as a subject. The word *fi* in sentence (4) should be used in relation to age, that is, the speaker is younger than the speaker. If the speaker's age is older than the speech partner, the possessive marker used is *ni*. But in this case, a wife, even though she is older, still uses the word *fi* to honor her husband. Likewise, with *pasul*, this word is used not just to convey the meaning or message of the sentence but because you want to get the implication of politeness. If it is not husband and wife and other social status, age relations as in this case, the speaker does not use *pasul* but *wi* 'tooth'. This choice of words is used because even though they are grammatically acceptable, they are socially unacceptable.

In example (5), the politeness marker used by the wife to show her politeness to her husband is the pronoun persona *fi*. While the words *eme* 'he' and *bola-bola* 'sleep' are part of the speech level, the choice of this level of speech does not refer to the husband but to the third person singular, the person the husband and wife are talking about.

A similar thing can also be seen in example (6), the level of speech that refers to the husband is the personal pronoun *fa* 'you'. The role of this word is the same as *fi* in example sentence (5). Meanwhile, the words *eme* 'he' and *fajou* 'eat' are polite markers that refer to the third person singular. *Eme* is a form of speech level that is higher than *i* 'dia', while *fajou* is a form of speech level that has a higher position than *fa* 'eat'.

Horizontal Dimension Speech Level

The level of horizontal speech is based on the closeness and age of the parties involved in the speech event. Closeness and peer age can be realized in two domains, namely kinship relationships and friendship relationships. Apart from

between parties in a speech event, this level of speech also applies to the person being discussed, the third person singular.

In the realm of family or kinship, the horizontal level of speech applies to relationships between families of the same age. Even though there is an age difference, if the range of differences is not too significant then the lexicon used in the entire conversation between parties in a speech event always uses a horizontal level of speech. The following is an example of a sentence used because of the same age.

- (7) *Ni apota ma isapma i bosi ma?*
Kepalamu mengapa bengkak?
Why is your head swollen?

Example (7) is a form of speech level used by speakers who are the same age as the speaker. Horizontal speech level markers can be identified through the choice of words such as *ni* 'you' and *apota* 'head'. *Ni* is a possessive pronoun that has the same position as *fi*, but the use of these two forms of possessive pronouns is due to different social backgrounds. *Ni* is used to refer to speakers who are the same age as the speaker. Meanwhile, *fi*, as previously explained above, is used for different ages or people with a higher social status.

The word *apota* is a form of a noun in Makeang Luar language which is used for a horizontal level of speech. In its use, this word has the same position as the word *tabea* 'head', both are personal pronouns, but contextually, these two words have different social implications. *Apota* is used for peers, while *tabea* is used for differences in age and degree of position or social status. Socially, the use of the word *tabea* has much higher politeness implications compared to the word *apota*.

The level of speech used for peers can also be seen in the two example sentences below.

- (8) *Ne si toguma, ma no sor fa lamo2 e*
Kalau selesai buang air (kecil), jangan lupa siram yang banyak
When you have finished peeing, don't forget to flush plenty
- (9) *Finggepe me omo amo i teng me pis/pipis wayo*
Sudah tanya dia tetapi dia belum punya uang
I have asked him but he doesn't have the money yet

The speech level in example (8) above shows a sentence addressed to the speech partner, while the example speech level (9) shows a sentence addressed to the person being discussed, third person singular. In sentence (8), the marker of peer relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor appears in the words *si* 'pee' and *no* 'you'. In Makeang Luar language, *si* is the equivalent verb to *tebe*. These two words have the same meaning, but the context at the level of speech is different. *Si* is for the same age and *tebe* is for higher age and social status. Meanwhile, the word *no* is the same personal pronoun as *ni* as explained in example sentence (3) above.

In sentence (9), the level of speech displayed is based on the relationship between the speaker and a single third person, not the relationship between the speaker and the speech partner. The difference in age and social status between the speaker and the speech partner, in the context of sentence (9), is not important or is not a consideration for the use of a particular level of speech because the sentence refers to the person being spoken about. Thus, differences in age and social status will only be important if the third person being discussed has a higher age and/or social status than the speaker or speech partner.

The entire lexicon shown in sentence (9) above shows that the speaker and the third person singular are the same age. Markers of age equality between them are identified through the words *me* 'dia' and *pis* or *pipis* 'money'. *Me* has the same position as *eme*, but *me* is for the normal level of speech, while *eme* is for a higher level of speech or one that has politeness implications for the speaker or speech partner. Meanwhile, the word *pis* or *pipis* is the same noun as *pangaingi*, but in its use, *pis* or *pipis* is intended for people of the same age, while *pangaingi* is for people who are older or have a higher social status.

Apart from peer age, speech level can also be seen from the closeness or familiarity between speakers. The following is an example sentence:

(10) *Na sagal himnya, gola na taro i gufi*
 Kamu berjalan baik-baik nanti injak kakinya
 You must be careful walking to avoid stepping on someone's feet

This example shows the closeness or familiarity between the parties. In sentence (10), the word *na* 'you' is a form of personal pronoun which is a marker of peer equality between the speaker and the speech partner. If the age or social status of the interlocutor is higher than *na* changes to *fa*.

Apart from that, there is possessive pronoun *i* which is a marker of equality between the speaker and the person being talked about (third person singular). The word *i* is a third person singular marker that refers to the feet (his/her feet). If the age or social status of the third person singular being discussed is higher than *i* changes to *di* or *da*. The next marker is the *gufi* 'foot'. This word is used because the relationship between the speaker and the person being discussed is of the same age. If the age or social status is higher than the word *gufi* changes to *taro-taro*. In the language practice of the Makeang Luar community, *taro-taro* is a more polite word compared to *gufi*.

Speech levels based on friendship or familiarity can also arise in situations that do not take into account the age relationship between the speaker and the addressee or with the third person singular. The sentence below was delivered by someone who is younger than the partner, but because of the closeness between them, joke sentences appear as in sentence (11) below.

(11) *Ni iya minye ne i jape-jape nye*
 Tanganmu kotor sekali
 Your hands are so dirty

This sentence is a form of joke from A to B. In terms of age, even though B is older, the closeness between them means that A conveys a joking sentence as in sentence (11) above. In fact, B's hands are not dirty, but it is a kind of mockery for people whose hands are dull because of garden workers so that the condition of their hands is like that. Markers of their closeness can be identified from the use of the possessive pronouns *ni* 'you (possess)' and *iya* 'hand'. The word *iya* is a noun that is equivalent to the word *jou-jou*, but *iya* is used for peer age or familiarity, while the word *jou-jou* is for a more polite level of speech.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The level of speech in the Makeang Luar language is based on several social situations, which are differences in age, social status or degree of a person's position, peer age, and closeness or friendship. This research succeeded in creating two categories of speech levels, namely the speech level which has a vertical dimension, and the speech level which has a horizontal dimension.

The vertical level of speech is a variation of language that is used because it wants to convey the implication of politeness or respect for the speech partner or the third singular pronoun. This variation is used because it is based on differences in a person's age and social status. For this reason, the vertical level of speech can be called a formal language variation. Meanwhile, the horizontal level of speech is related to the age of the parties involved in the speech event and/or due to closeness or familiarity. This level of speech is considered an informal variation.

Politeness markers at various levels of speech that appear in the Makeang Luar language are personal pronouns, verbs, nouns and possessive pronouns. The role of these words changes according to the involvement of the participants in the speech. For example, the pronominal persona *fi* is a marker of politeness which is based on the age difference between the speaker and the speech partner or the person being discussed. This word will change when the ages of the parties involved in the speech event are the same age or because of considerations of closeness or familiarity.

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