

PhD Thesis Summary

**The discourse
of Friday sermon in Surakarta**

A socio-pragmatic study

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to explain the Friday sermon by analysing the structure of its discourse, the selection and composition of its topics, the form and functions of its codes and code switching, the form of its speech acts, and the characteristics of its language and specific terms. The method used is descriptive and qualitative. This research considers the speech components of the sermon and approaches it contextually. The analysis of the speech acts is based on Kreidler's theory (1998), while that of the characteristics of the language is based on the Dell Hymes's theory. The data were collected in Surakarta and several of its mosques assuming the representativeness of the city and the location of the mosques. The analysis and presentation of the data have led to the following conclusions: the Friday sermon contains oral discourse which has regular and typical structure; the strategies of the composition of the topics include quotation, storytelling, and use of popular expressions; the forms of the codes and code switching involve Arabic, Indonesian, Javanese, and English languages; the utterances of the sermon contain all forms of speech acts; various terms appear in the sermons indicating that the Friday sermon functions as a register or usage of language in a particular field.

KEY WORDS

Discourse, Friday sermon, Surakarta, and socio-pragmatic.

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BACKGROUND AND PRACTICE CONTEXT

The research focuses on Friday sermons in Surakarta which use Indonesian language as the medium. The selection of the study object is based on the assumption that the language utilized has typical forms, functions and characteristics. As an oral discourse, the Friday sermon consists of two shorter sermons each of which starts and ends with a *salaam*. These two sermons have unique structures. The structure of the first sermon consists of the following components: (1) *mukadimah* (opening) consisting of *hamdallah* (praise to God), the two sentences of the *syahadat* (testimony) and *shalawat Nabi* (blessing for the Prophet), (2) a call to the congregation to improve their *taqwa* (Islamic concept of God consciousness), (3) content/subject of the sermon which is supported with data, facts, analysis, quotation from the Qur'anic *nash* (texts) or *Hadith* (a collection of the Prophet's sayings and deeds), (4) a brief conclusion, (5) closing consisting of invocations and prayers. Similar to the first sermon, the second sermon consists of (1) *hamdallah*, the two sentences of *syahadat*, and *shalawat Nabi*, (2) an appeal for stronger *taqwa*, (3) summary of the first sermon (4) closing prayers in favour of all Muslims (men and women) (Syam 2003: 33).

The objective of the Friday sermon as an Islamic ritual is to convey the message of *taqwa* towards Allah *subẖānahu wata'ālā*. *Taqwa* is God consciousness to be nurtured by performing what Allah SWT commands and keeping away from what He forbids. The *Khatib*, the person who delivers the sermon, determines the subject matter in support of which he quotes the Qur'an and *Hadith*. It is clear that topic selection and organization play an important role in achieving the aim of the Friday sermon. They are among the many strategies employed by the *Khatib* to make his sermon effective. It is thus interesting to study the Friday sermon by considering its topic selection and composition in one whole discourse.

A more particular phenomenon related to the Friday sermon in Surakarta is the continuing use of the Javanese as the primary language. The vernacular spoken in Surakarta is Javanese of the Surakarta dialect which is quite distinct in terms of its vocabulary and intonation from other dialects such as those of Semarang and Surabaya areas. Surakartanese Javanese can be seen as the standard Javanese given that Surakarta is the centre of Javanese culture. Thus, the use of Javanese language in Friday sermon must have been determined by Surakarta being the utterance setting. The use of Javanese language varies in terms of utterance levels – *ngoko* (common usage) and *krama* (polite usage). The phenomenon has attracted scholars to study the sermon as has been done by Saddhono (2010, 2011) who concludes that Javanese culture considerably affects the use of language in the Friday sermon in Surakarta

Friday sermons, however, cannot be separated from the use of Arabic language as well due to the fixed format of the Friday sermon and the related religious concepts, such as *shalawat*, *syahadat* and *hamdallah*. These factors make the *khatib's* utterances distinctive. The *khatib's* utterances can be regarded as speech acts, that is, utterances as functional unit in communication (Richards, Platt, and Weber 1985: 265). Seen as a whole discourse, the Friday sermon

encompasses some characteristics in the way it uses language, noticeably in its choice of terms and vocabulary.

This research is a new study with reference to the Friday sermon. Earlier studies have been respectively conducted by Amir Ma'ruf (1999), Dudung Rahmat Hidayat (1999), Widada Hadisaputra (2005), and Kundharu Saddhono (2005). Grounded on previous researches, it can be considered as unique in terms of its object of study, which is Islamic Friday sermons in Surakarta, and the socio-pragmatic approach it employs. Hence, this research is different from previous studies and focused on a specific study.

LITERATURE SUMMARY

A study of sermon register needs to be done through a sociolinguistic approach which views language as a social fact. Language is the primary means of communication in human interaction. By using language, human tries to maintain social and communal cohesiveness, to share information, attitudes, ideas and to understand each other (Treece 1983: 24-25).

Linguistics simply concentrates on language structure independently and separately from the context. Sociolinguistics, however, examines language in social and situational context (Biber and Finegan 1994: v). Seen from the sociolinguistic perspective, language social phenomenon and language usage are not merely determined by situational factors, but also, as stated by Fishman (1970: 2), by "who speaks, what the language is, to whom and when it is spoken".

A study of the Friday sermon needs to be related to the comprehension of the terms of context sociolinguistics. It is true that the terms of context are identified in pure linguistics, but they have different definition from the way context is conceptualized in sociolinguistics. Context in pure linguistics refers to the context in terms of relation between language units. For instance, a phoneme and another phoneme in phonological sphere, a morpheme and another morpheme in morphological unit, a word and another word in syntax domain and so forth (Usdiyanto 2004: 10).

Meanwhile, context in sociolinguistic study refers to non-linguistic environment of utterances, a device to elaborate the characteristics of a situation that needs to be done in order to understand the situation itself (Moeliono 1999: 522; Saddhono 2004). An utterance could be interpreted differently when used in a different context. It can be assumed that context provides connection between a language unit and a non-language factor or between language and the external factors of the language. It is in line with Verhaar's (1980: 14-16) linguistic concept which affirms that sociolinguistics study is correlated to linguistics which theoretically understands language meaning as emerging in the order of expression - situation - meaning. It means that in sociolinguistics, the meaning of language is determined once the expression in the form of language unit encounters a situation as non-language unit.

A language study that takes into consideration the external variables

of a language may employ a framework proposed by Dell Hymes (1974) which he terms SPEAKING, an acronym which contains eight elements. SPEAKING stands for *setting and scene, participants, ends, act of sequence, keys, instrumentalities, norms of interaction an interpretation and genres* (Suwito 1985: 32; Wardhaugh 1998: 153; Fasold 1993: 44; Chaer and Agustina 1995: 62).

Yet, this study also employs a pragmatic studies framework, which examines factors that influence the selection of language form and speech act in social interaction and the effect of utterance selection (Crystal 1987: 120-121). Sermon register is a phenomenon of interactional language usage in such a situation. There is an exclusive understanding within it between the speaker and the listener that determines the distinctive speech act form in a sermon. According to Leech (1993: 15), the selection of speech act form is influenced by speech situation.

As indicated by Halliday and Hasan (1994), factors influencing utterance occurrence can be classified into the following three components: field (related to what is happening in a certain field), tenor (related to the participants involved in the verbal interaction) and mode (related to the selection of language form or discourse that ought to be used in interaction). These factors unquestionably affect the way a speaker interacts with her partner. Accordingly, this manner of interaction, which is determined by free variables, will influence language structure or, in a wider sense, discourse which refers to its independent variable (Wijana 1996: 7). This means that an utterance in a discourse cannot be separated from the social factors of both the speaker and her partner.

The three Halliday factors which consist of field, tenor and mode refer to specific things in a certain utterance situation. Field refers to what happens or when a social act takes place. It is what the tenor does with the language as its main component. Tenor refers to some aspects including those who participate, the participants' characteristics, and their roles and positions in the social occurrence. Meanwhile, mode signifies the role of language in a certain situation, such as persuading, describing, lecturing and so forth.

Speech act is an utterance which serves as functional unit in communication (Richards, Platt, and Weber 1985: 265; Allan 1998: 164). In uttering the speech, one can do other things besides purely saying something. In this regard, Leech (1993: 316) writes that the appropriate way to comprehend a speech act is by means of Austin's comparison of speech act which has also been referred to by Searle (1979: 23-24). Austin (1962) divides speech act into three categories; 1) locutionary act, 2) illocutionary act and 3) perlocutionary act. Among those three speech acts, it is illocutionary act which has a focal role in communication. Searle (1979: 53) classifies illocutionary into seven types of speech act; assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, declarative, rogative and performative.

This research is a study in the field of socio-pragmatics. Socio-pragmatics is an analysis of local conditions which specify language usage (Tarigan 1986: 26). Socio-pragmatics considers not only the language, but also the social

environment which supports the language. Zamzani (2007) adds that socio-pragmatics studies language in its relation with the society using the language. It needs, therefore, data and subjects of more than one single individual. The challenges in socio-pragmatics are connected with not only the intention behind the speech, but also the social aspects which underlie the emergence of the speech. A distinct value in terms of politeness and speech act manner is embedded within the culture of the speaker. The linguistic problem in this study emerges from the distinction of social system which provides a context for the intention and situation of the utterances, for where and how they appear, which are to be considered as factors influencing them.

METHODS USED

This research analyses language usage in its context and situation, that is, language in its natural setting. It is descriptive and qualitative in nature as it relies on qualitative description using words instead of mathematical numbers or statistics (Lindlof 1994: 21). To examine the subject matter, three steps of analysis are employed: exploration, description and explanation.

The sermons taken as samples are those that have characteristics considered appropriate to be used as data to be analysed and are regarded as representative of the whole population (Subroto 2007: 32). In selecting the samples, consideration was given to the representativeness the site and the environment of the mosques. Data collection was conducted using three techniques: recording, both audio and written, and in-depth interviews. A technique called paraphrasing is used in this research, a technique which rephrases utterances, statements or construction differently, without changing the original information or content.

According to Soepomo Poedjosoedarmo (2011: 20), sociolinguistic research is basically a contextual research which considers utterance form (language) in its social context in which the occurrence of an utterance takes place. Social context is taken into account in data analysis in terms of several components of speech, including speaker, partner, situation, objective and points of utterance (Sudaryanto 1995: 38). This research employs socio-pragmatic approach in that it analyses language by considering elements beyond the language, such as social, situational and cultural factors (Markhamah 2001: 11).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Friday sermon is an oral discourse which has an orderly discourse structure. The reason for this is that the Friday sermon is part of the Friday prayer's sequence which contributes to the creation of a sacred situation. The situation leads the *khatib* to deliver the sermon in a standardized language. It is prescribed by religious rules, regulations, and codes of conduct in Friday sermon. Those characteristics make the Friday sermon's structure unique, standardized and fixed. A neglected or missed element of the structure will render the Friday sermon unlawful. The Friday sermon's discourse structure is unique in that it consists of one discourse that contains two shorter discourses

each of which has its own structure.

The Friday sermon is one intact discourse consisting of two shorter sermons. The first sermon which is called *khutbah ula* comprises (1) an opening or *iftitah*, itself consisting of a *salaam*, *azan* (the Islamic call to prayer), *hamdallah*, *syahadat*, *shalawat*, an appeal for *taqwa* and Qur`anic verses, (2) content, (3) a closing ended with prayers. The second one is called *khutbah tsaniyah* comprising (1) an opening, itself consisting of *hamdallah*, *syahadat*, *shalawat* and an appeal for *taqwa*, (2) a body containing the conclusion of the first sermon and (3) closing or *ikhthitam*, which ends with closing prayers.

The topic composition of the Friday sermons analysed contain (1) quotations from the Qur`an, *Hadith*, stories expressed in dialogues, or sayings, (2) an episode from the biography of the *nabi*, of the *nabi's* companions, history, or stories of the day, and (3) the use of popular expressions or sayings in Arabic, Indonesian, Javanese or English language. Topic selection is mostly based on the mosque environment. (1) In a family environment, the topics selected are related to the problems arising within the family and society. (2) In a religious environment, the topics selected are related to the problems of religious knowledge. (3) In an academic environment, the topics selected are related to events happening in society and their relationship with academic knowledge. (4) In a work environment, the topics selected deal with problems in the workplace, and (5) in a social environment, the topics selected deal with social issues. The various topics composed and selected in the Friday sermon converge into the effort of calling on Muslim to nurture further their *taqwa* and faith.

Indonesian language is the most dominant language used in the Friday sermons analysed, instead of Javanese, Arabic or English. Despite its infrequent use, however, it is impossible for the *khatib* to avoid Arabic altogether because the sermon itself is a part of an Islamic prayer and because of the situational demand. Similarly, Javanese language is also used less frequently than Indonesian language by the *khatib* due to the factors of speech location, speaker, partner, and cultural background. English words and phrases appear in the sermon once in a while depending mostly on the speaker factor.

When it comes to code and code switching in the Friday sermons analysed, it can be concluded that based on the language type, the code can be divided into four categories: Indonesian, Arabic, Javanese and English. Based on its variation, standardized usage and slang in Indonesian are found. Code switching in the sermon sentences is manifested as words, repeated words and phrases. The types of code switching in sentences are internal and external. Attitude and linguistic factors are in the background of the code switching. Code switching among sentences in the Friday sermons is found both fixed and temporary. The dominant characteristic is external code. The determining factors of code switching are speaker, partner, topic, prestige and changes in the situation in general, and the specific Islamic ideology followed by the place where the sermon is given, the mosque.

The functions of code switching in the Friday sermons are expression of

gratitude, sanctification of God's name, praise to God, respect, prohibition, showing prestige, asking for permission, begging for mercy, beautifying the speech, changing the topic, praying, making promises, articulating certain terms, stating doubts and condemnation.

In the Friday sermons analysed are found all Kreidler's types of speech acts (1998). They are assertive, performative, verdictive, expressive, directive, commissive and phatic. The type of speech act which is dominantly used in the Friday sermons is directive speech act and its variations. This phenomenon is closely related to the sermons' objective of engaging the congregations to improve their *taqwa* towards Allah SWT.

Many terms appearing in the sermons can be seen as grounded on the fact that the Friday sermon is a register or language usage in a certain field, which is a sermon in Islam. As the utterance occurs in the field of Islam, the terms are mostly in Arabic. This is expected because the use of Arabic is required in the Friday sermon. This research finds that the characteristic of vocabulary usage is rooted in the environment of the mosque - familial, religious, academic, work and social. The mosque environment impacts on the language, vocabulary and diction in the utterance of the Friday sermons analysed. Furthermore, social factors create style differences in each mosque in these five environments. The factors of speaker, partner, location and topic influence the use of language and vocabulary as well. Despite the Friday sermon's distinct rules, the utterances are influenced by the speaker. The speaker has freedom with respect to styles when delivering his sermon within the boundaries of the prevailing rules.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis of the data, it can be concluded that the Friday sermon is an utterance delivered by the *khatib* in sacred situation because it is a part of an Islamic ritual which contains a call to the congregation to improve their *taqwa* towards Allah SWT. The exclusivity of the Friday sermon can be found in its discourse structure, code and code switching forms and functions, speech act and language and diction characteristics. Analysis in this research reveals that the Friday sermon is unique compared to regular forms of preaching, recitation, "seven-minute preaching" and any other type of preaching in Islam or other religions.

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