

## **Address Term In a Family of Javanese *Priyayi***

Susilo Supardo  
Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto

### **Abstrak**

Priyayi sebagai kelas sosial merupakan relik sistem feodal di jawa. Ia merefleksikan cara berpikir yang muncul dalam bahasa. Kajian ini berupaya mendeskripsikan masalah sapaan dalam salah satu keluarga unit kelas sosial ini, prilaku penggunaan sapaan dan fungsinya. Tulisan ini diharapkan dapat menghimpun istilah sapaan sebagai bahan informasi tentang sistem sapaan kelas ini yang bertahan pada masanya. Topik ini cukup kompleks karena menampilkan sistem strata satuan lingual, etika, bahasa dan pergaulan, aspek psiko-sosial dan secara lebih luas lingkup budaya. Pernyataan di atas, mengisyaratkan adanya istilah seperti 'dimas', 'diajeng', 'jeng', (be) 'ndoro', 'mbah' dan sebagainya. Aktualisasi pemanfaatan istilah sapaan meliputi komunikasi lisan dan tertulis disertai sikap warganya, demikian juga tempat unit keluarga berfungsi sebagai arena interaksi.

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**Kata kunci:** istilah sapaan, priyayi, keluarga.

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### **Introduction**

When we come to think about language, there is a close correspondence between the life of human beings and the means they use their interaction. In most cases we have to take account of the way we start talking to other people in society. This is a process in which human need the company of each other. Such process can only take place when two people are engaged in speech activities where exchanging speech actually happens. In this interaction, the people concerned usually address each other. From this point, it is reasonable to assume that "address" is one of many language elements which are very important in social interaction.

Linguists have concerned themselves with the study of language for many years, they are motivated to know more about the social function of language in general and the social function in particular. A study of the social function of the language then comes into existence which labeled a promising term "sociolinguistics".

In this space the writer would like to discuss a particular aspect of the sociolinguistic field, that is to say "Address terms in a Family of Javanese of Priyayi". The topic takes on interest when we consider that in each of our lives there is such a broad

range of persons with whom we have social contact, from loves ones, friends, relatives, to those we want to keep at various degrees of social distance.

In a small circle of society, a family in contact with each other using a particular address which is designed after the family concerned. The Javanese priyayi which will be the subject of this study, presents particular address terms which no other social class will ever use in the interaction among the members. In Javanese priyayi community, we can register certain states of intimacy by using titles (i.e. *Raden Mas*, *Raden Ajeng* for a male and a female respectively), and nicknames in various combinations, when we feel that the address terms are comfortable with a certain person.

Priyayi being a social class is actually a relic of the feudal system in Java. It reflects a particular way of thinking which appears in the language of the class.

The address terms as would be presented in this work, form dominant characteristics of the class. They are well maintained by the members since they claim that they are closely related to the class and are of importance as the basis of education of the children.

When Indonesia achieved its independence, the principle of equality/egalitarianism was made known to the people of the republic. It was hoped that such a social class would henceforth disappear from the life of the nation. However the reality is different. This social class is still in existence up to the present time. It is because of the phenomenon mentioned above, that the writer is encouraged to assume that linguistics facts pertaining to forms of address would be of interested to observe. The result of this observation, which is preliminary note on the study of Javanese, would be presented hereafter.

The study of address terms among family members of Javanese priyayi has the following objectives: to gather data as a source of information of address terms in use among family members of Javanese Priyayi, to provide an analysis of the address terms in sociolinguistics view in search of sociolinguistics rules, and to provide an answer to the following questions; when, to whom, and by whom the addresses terms are used according to the Javanese custom.

The study is intended to touch the interaction within the family under normal circumstances. The scope will actually cover three points of study: the substance of the communication both oral and written; the situation where the family as a social unit functions as the arena of interaction; the attitude of interlocutors.

## **Theoretical Review**

### *Address Terms*

When one person speaks to another, the selection of certain linguistic forms is governed by the relation between the addresser and the addressee. The relation may be based on the difference in function or social status, intimacy, as well as in birth. The linguistic forms used here are normally identified as address terms. In other words, it is to assume that address terms are certain linguistic forms used in addressing someone to talk to.

These linguistic forms follow a rule that is truly relational. Their use is not predictable from properties of the addressee alone but from properties of the speaker or the addresser as well. Kinship terms of address e.g. *Bapak, Ibu, Mbak, and Dimas*, are also relational linguistic forms, but they constitute a restricted of relationship among the family members. Proper names such as *Yudi, Hema*, constitute a nearly general language of relationship, the semantic dimensions involved serve to relate to one another all of the family members.

Since there is a rule of the use of address terms the interlocutors should realize that one of them may said to have power over another. In this case Brown and Gilman (1972: 105) further explain:

One person may be said to have power over another in the degree that he is able to control the behavior of another. Power is a relationship between at least two persons and it is in the sense that both cannot have power in the same area of behavior. The power semantic is similarly non-reciprocal, the superior says T and receive V.

The Priyayi family shows more than twenty address terms which should be used appropriately according to the pattern of attitude of the class members. Some of the terms are specific and are never used by any other class of non-Priyayi group.

The subject of this study belongs to the Priyayi class closely related to the Surakarta Sunan (the Javanese King in Central Java), that is Sunan Pakubuwonon the fifth.

The address terms like *Dimas, Doro Ajeng, Doro den Ayu*, are concrete examples of this. Basically, these terms are mainly used in intra-family interaction and are not applicable in inter-family communication of non-Priyayi class or those who are not from the same noble birth.

### *Family*

A short definition of the term “family” says that family is parents and children (Hornby, 1974: 313). This inadequate and short description needs explaining.

Family is actually a social unit that consists of parents and dependent children living in the same house. This article will

also include non-related person that is the maidservant. It is also worth noting that despite the use (*Em*) *Bah* in addressing the maidservant, it does not mean that she is related to the family members.

This family belongs to the aristocratic class and still retains traditional norms within household including the relative position of the members. It would be evident if we pay more attentions to the status of the family members. **Brown** and Peter Doughty (1974: 81) classifies the matter as follows:

...Positional families are those in which individuals relate to each other in terms of their relative position. Father is father, youngest children child is youngest child, and the behavior expected of each is relabeled to this role and its status.

The system of family in the priyayi class is based on the principle mentioned above. In this class the relative position is strictly maintained, because it becomes a part of the whole system of life in the class.

#### *Priyayi*

Javanese people belong to a stratified society. These are different social levels. This is actually feudal system. Priyayi is an upper class having aristocratic background. The members of this class are strongly bound to traditional norms especially in the use of language during the interaction with their parents and other class members. Based on vertical line of relation genealogical tree there are two groups of priyayi class. The one, which is closely related to the sultan or sunan that is up to the fifth generation, is regarded to be genuine royal descendant. The members of this group bear the title *Raden Mas* if they are boys, and the girls get *Raden Ajeng* as the priyayi title.

The title *Raden Ajeng* is no longer in use when the girls are married. They will get *Raden Ayu* as being married women instead. The other group, which is not directly related to the Sultan or Sunan, should be classified as common priyayi. The members of this group will only bear the title *Raden*, if they are boys and *Raden Roro* if they are girls. The married women usually bear the title *Raden Nganten*.

The above mentioned is the first meaning of priyayi. Besides of that there are other two meaning refers to a class of status. The word 'priyayi' in this term refers to a group of educated people holding certain functions and roles, such as government officials. This group does not present identifying features of a noble birth. In other words it is not defined on the basis of genealogical criteria but the function and the position of the members in the society. It is possible that a person coming from rural country without any title of noble birth is regarded as belonging to priyayi class when he works in an office or as an

employee. The last meaning of priyayi is polite reference. It refers to both second and third person, similar to "you", "he" or "she". But at present people rarely use such a term in this sense in their daily language because they feel that it is not "*panjenengan*", for "he" or "she" which actually are pronoun used as polite references. This is in the high polite form. In other words the word priyayi refers to the third person which means, "man" or "people". So if someone is saying "priyayine pinter", this utterance means "that man or that people is intelligent". The use of priyayi, as being polite reference is restricted only in rural areas, especially farmers for addressing people other classes such as businessmen, or government officials, because of the feeling of inferiority. The young generations of Javanese society now reluctantly use 'priyayi' in the last sense because they regard it actually as being in the contrast with the modern situation.

### **Methodology**

The subjects of this study are members of a family of Javanese priyayi who lives in Yogjakarta. The members are then those who belong to the genuine royal line of descent. In compiling this article the data has to be collected from various sources as follows. The informant is self-informant in the sense that the writer is the informant of the research belongs to the class, which is now the subject of the study. Actually this is not a relatively objective way of collecting data, because subjectivity of judgement for correct and true analysis. However, this technique was merely used as comparison to the more sound technique of collecting data such as tape-recording and direct interview. The writer used his own idiolect to compare with the generally accepted patterns of address in the family concerned.

This technique is a complementary one to the more sound and scientific techniques of collecting data using diary and a collection of letters received from the members of the family. By means of these techniques, the data which are collected, will be adequate to account for the analysis. In addition to the technique of collecting data through self-informant source, this study contains data collected through diary. Different kinds of speech event taking place were jotted down in a diary. This type of written recording was at least of importance to the study since it presented natural speech events which were unconsciously employed. Address terms normally used by the family members of the class are included in the speech events. Another source of data, which is importance in providing sound informations for the study, is a collecting letters sent by the family members to the writer. Since the letters are the privates

ones, the sender using the appropriate address terms in Javanese. They also retell the interactions which happen among themselves in the letters. It is therefore possible to assume that this collection is relatively objective to be used as a source of data.

After collecting sufficient data through the three sources above mentioned the writer proceeded to the analysis of activity in the study, since through this the writer would be able to present the result of the study. In analyzing the data the writer would give stress on the aim of study. Since the aim of study is to seek answers to the questions concerning the address terms, a descriptive method is applied. This analysis would lead to the formulations of address of classification and address pattern. All data which are collected from their sources coming from the self-informant in the form of idiolect, the data which are reached in a diary, and the third is collection of letters are then sorted in accuracy. The second step in the analysis is the specification of the address terms. This is done on two bases. (1) The relationship among the family members, and (2) The meaning of the terms. It is, due to these procedures that the inductive approach is then applied.

## **Result and Discussion**

### *Address Terms in Actual Interaction Among the Family Members.*

Speaking about the use of address among Javanese priyayi class, the factor which may influence this phenomenon should be taken into account some of the are the social stratification is a term used to refer to any system of hierarchical ordering of groups within a society (Frudgill, 1974: 35). In this section the writer will concentrate on the class which is marked by social position (the royal family or descendant). In Javanese tradition there are two kinds of class namely: the priyayi and the non-priyayi. Most of the educated Indonesians during the Dutch Colonial Government are Javanese, and among them membership in the civil service inherited to the descendants of the priyayi (Vreeland, 1975:176). In this concept priyayi refers to the royal descendants. According to the royal tradition of Surakarta, those who belong to the fifth generation are still regarded as the royal family or descendants. But now another class is coming up called a low priyayi. This class actually belongs to an njayer class.

Back to the point of low priyayi, an example could be presented here. If a peasant can save his money, he will invest in the education of a son in order that the latter may achieve a low priyayi (Civil Servant) status (Mulder, 1978:85). The real or

genuine priyayi class (that is the royal descendant) is usually respected by the other class due to the status and also the polite variety of language they use.

In most cases the priyayi's children are suggested to avoid non-standard language and the use of rude expressions. The parents always teach their children to respect other people both from the same class and the lower one. Even the modern priyayi family tends to assume that the concept of priyayi should be interpreted as a class which appreciates politeness and moral education. All of these are the identifying features of the priyayi class.

Unlike in Bali, the class system is unknown in Java. The existing classes are determined by different criteria where we have: traders, peasants, government officials, and armed forces. Since the priyayi is family is a typical class which retains the appropriate use of language in the interaction, the member usually speak in either standard karma (standard high polite) or standard ngoko alus or ngoko andhap (standard polite intimate form). This last form is also called antyabata (Poedjo Sedarmo, 1979:14 and 27). Regarding from this principle and also on the basis of the relation between the family members this class retains special terms of address of its own.

In social interaction, where language is used as the medium of communication, the Javanese people recognize certain codes for expressing politeness and respect. Javanese has also its way of showing relationship between the interlocutors. The speakers of this language have special terms of address which they use when they talk to other people.

They know the people who can be addressed using certain address terms convenient to both the addressor and the addressees. The choice of address terms depends on some social exterminators, such as: physical, economical, political differences as well as familiarity, sex, magic, and peculiarity of physical conditions, and any others (Poedjo Soedarmo, 1979:6).

#### *Address between Husband and Wife.*

The husband can address his wife in different ways. He may use: Jeng, Ibu, or Bu. The address term Jeng may be followed by a nickname. The husband of this family usually addresses his wife with Jeng Buh or Jeng Weny when wants to express affection. Both of these address terms are the wife's nicknames. The husband can also address his wife with Jeng, which is not in Co-occurrence. The use of Jeng happens when nobody else is present (e.g. a guest), the husband will use Ibu or Bu instead. This address term is actually a kinship term meaning mother. The children use this term in addressing their mother. When the husband wants to express intimacy or solidarity, he uses this term.

The pattern of relation between husband and wife is the V-V pattern which means reciprocal in power but not in term of address.

When the husband addresses his wife with Jeng (followed by a nickname or nod), he will be addressed with Mas (with or without a nickname). However, if he addresses his wife with Ibu or Bu (for short) which is never in Co-occurrence the wife will address him with Bapak or Pak in similar pattern. The Ibu - Bapak and Bu - Pak address patterns are used when the participants want to express intimacy and solidarity. This happens when somebody else is present, for instance a guest or one of the children. Bapak and Pak mean father which are basically kinship terms normally used by the children when they address their father. It is worth noting here that most frequently the wife prefers to address her husband with Mas (honored brother) followed by nickname: Mas Sus. The V-V pattern in this address system does not mean the intimacy is decreased but the participants, being members of a priyayi family, should respect each other. They keep showing their intimacy through their attitudes. The following table will show the system of address between husband and wife.

**Table 1**

| Addressor | Addressee | Terms        | Description            | Power |
|-----------|-----------|--------------|------------------------|-------|
| Husband   | Wife      | Jeng         | Optional Co-occurrence | V-V   |
|           |           | Ibu or Bu    | Never in Co-occurrence | V-V   |
| Wife      | Husband   | Mas          | Optional Co-occurrence | V-V   |
|           |           | Bapak or Pak | Never in Co-occurrence | V-V   |

#### *Address between Parents and Children.*

The pattern of address between parents and children shows more variants. Actually, as address term is not merely a medium of interaction but also a means of expressing different kinds of things such as affection, intimacy, encouragement, compliment, and so forth.

When the parents want to address their daughter in normal situation, the nickname Yudi is used or shortened in Yud. This way of addressing is called njangkar which means the use of a name without any form of honorific (Koentjoro Ningrat, 1977:90).

To express affection or encouragement they use Wud, a special term used only for addressing a girl, or Cah Ayu which means beautiful girl (Cah means child, while Ayu means

beautiful). Sometimes they address the daughter with Trio which comes from Putri meaning princess or daughter. This term is only used in the priyayi family since it belongs to the royal descent.

The son gets other address terms - Normally they are addressed with their nicknames, such as Hema for the first son, Nanda for the second, while the third son receives Nindya as his address term. The parent may express their affection to their sons using Cah Bagus 'Handsome Boy' or Lee "small child" (boy). The pattern here is T-V which means that the parents give T to the children and receive V. the relationship between parents and children is asymmetrical because one side (the parents) is said to be more powerful than the other (Brown and Gilman, 1960:109). The table is showing the relation between parents and children in address pattern of priyayi family.

**Table 2**  
**Address between Parents and Children**

| Addressor | Address ee | Term   | Description             | Powe r |
|-----------|------------|--|-------------------------|--------|
| Parents   | Daughte r  | Yudi or Yud<br>Cah Ayu, Tri                        | Never in Co- occurrence | T-V    |
|           | Sons       | Hema or Ma<br>Nandan, Nindya,<br>Lik,<br>Cah Bagus | Never in Co- occurrence | T-V    |
| Children  | Father     | Bapak or Pak                                       | Never in Co- occurrence | V-T    |
|           | Mother     | Ibu or Bu  | Never in Co- occurrence |        |

#### *Address between Children and Children.*

The priyayi descendants will never address each other just with their nicknames or names, since this way is regarded to be impolite by the priyayi members. Accordingly they will get rid of the Jangkar way.

The older sister has to address her younger brothers with Dimas which is in optional Co-occurrence. This term means 'honorable younger brother', particularly used in the priyayi family of the royal descent. So do the elder brothers when addressing their younger brothers. The younger brothers should address their elder brothers using honorific form 'Mas' before the name of the addressee: Mas Hema, Mas Nanda. In this family Mas is always in Co-occurrence as mentioned before. The system of addressing between children and children will be made clear by means of the following the table. All of the address terms already mentioned appears in any situation of interaction.

**Table 3**  
**Address between Children and Children.**

| Addressor       | Addressee       | Term s | Description             | Power |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------|-------------------------|-------|
| Elder sister    | Younger brother | Dimas  | Optional Co-occurrence  | T-V   |
| Younger brother | Elder sister    | Mbak   | Always in Co-occurrence | V-V   |
| Elder brother   | Younger brother | Dimas  | Optional Co-occurrence  | T-V   |
| Younger brother | Elder brother   | Mas    | Always in Co-occurrence | V-T   |

*Address between Master and Maidservant.*

As has been mentioned before the family consists of parents and dependent children who live together in the same house. Besides these members there is also another non-related person who lives with them, that is the maidservant. Interaction between the master and the maidservant occur in any situation. They interact using certain codes appropriate for them.

Normally, the master addresses the maidservant with De, an abbreviated form of Mbok De, meaning grandmother, a term only used to address people from lower classes. This term is in optional Co-occurrence, which means it is possible to put the maidservant's nickname behind it; so that the address form will be De Jum (Jum is the nickname of the maidservant). The variant form of this address is Mbah, meaning 'grandparent'. In this family the term is always in Co-occurrence, so we find the addressing would be: Mbah Jum. In the contrary the maidservant will address her master with Ndoro, which is always in Co-occurrence. However, in case she wants to address the master's wife she has to use Ndoro, Den Ayu, which is never in Co-occurrence in this family. The term is applicable only to a priyayi's wife from the royal descent.

Usually, the master and the wife can use the terms of address interchangeably in addressing the maidservant or in alternation (Susan Eroin-Tripp in Gumperz and Hymes, 1972:225). The pattern of address between master and the maidservant reflects in the following table.

**Table 4**

### Address between Master and Maidservant.

| Addressor           | Addressee     | Terms          | Description               | Power |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Master and his wife | Maid servant  | De             | In optional Co-occurrence | T-V   |
|                     |               | Mbah           | Always in Co-occurrence   | T-V   |
| Maid servant        | Master        | Ndoro          | Always in Co-occurrence   | V-T   |
|                     | Master's wife | Ndoro, Den Ayu | Never in Co-occurrence    | V-T   |

Form the illustration presented above it is likely to assume that the modes reflect the social distance between the participants as explained by Edward like the following:

"Modes of address like other aspects of linguistics choice, both reflect and affirm how members perceive their relationship and especially the social distance between them" (Edward, 1976: 74).

### *Address between Children and Maidservant*

In a society where people still have to acknowledge the existence of class. It is obviously important that everyone should know his own position and status. A family is actually social unit. The member of a family may belong to a certain class say a priyayi class. The members know their own status and how to behave there in.

Since the maidservant is older than their parents about the same age as their grand mother, the children address her with Mbah, which is always in Co-occurrence. They address the maidservant them with Mbah-Jum. Although, the maidservant is an old as their grandmother, the children give T to her while they receive V from the maidservant. The maidservant will address the daughter with Ndo Ajeng or in short Ndoro Jeng which is in optional Co-occurrence, namely: Ndoro Bagus (Ndoro Ajeng) Yudi. The sons get Ndoro Mas in any situation. Sometimes the maidservant uses Ndoro Bagus when she wants to show affection, or encouragement or compliment, which means handsome master.

The masters always remind the children to respect the maidservant although the address pattern is T-V, it is because the maidservant is older than them. The children and the maidservant always keep intimacy and they love each other. This can be taken from the speech level they use. The maidservant when is supposed to interact with the children always use the intimate polite form (ngoko andhap), e.g.

1. Nindya: "Mbah Jum, Inu endi?"

Nindya: Mbah Jum, where is mother?"

2. Maidservant: "Ibu tindak blonjo".  
 Maidservant: "Your mother is shopping".

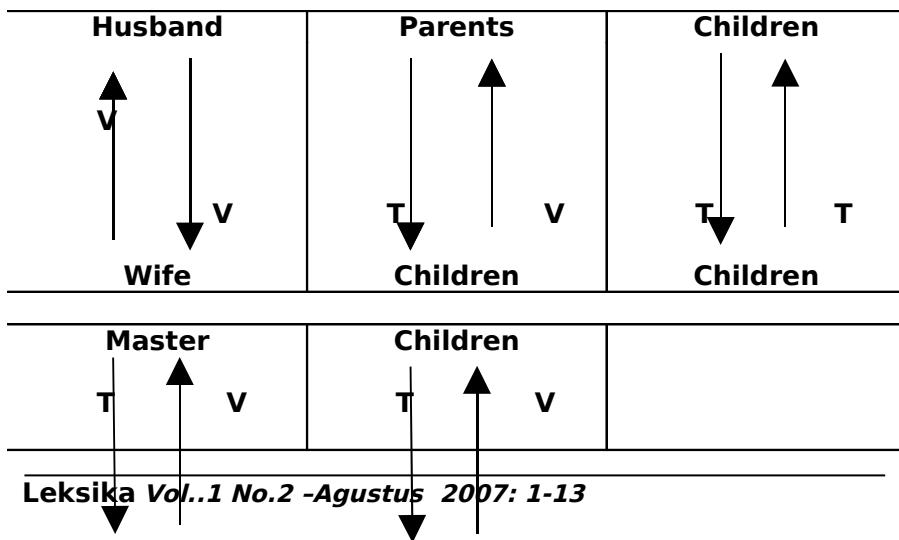
Such speech levels will never be used when the maidservant converses with the master. The following table is representing the address pattern between children and the maidservant.

**Table 5**  
**Address between Children and Maidservant.**

| addressor   | Addressee         | Terms                           | description  | Power      |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|--|------------|
| Children    | Maidservant       | Mbah                            | In Co-occurrence                                       | T-V        |
| Maidservant | Master's daughter | Ndoro<br>Ajeng<br>Ndoro<br>Jeng | In optional Co-occurrence                              | V-T        |
|             | Master's sons     | Ndoro<br>Mas<br>Ndoro<br>Bagus  | In optional Co-occurrence<br>In optional Co-occurrence | V-T<br>V-T |

In support of the above-mentioned table it is likely of use to present here the figures representing the power of participant in the interaction among family members. The figure will be drawn after the models used by Brown and Gilman (Brown and Gilman, 1960:110).

**Figure 1**



|                    |                    |  |
|--------------------|--------------------|--|
| <b>Maidservant</b> | <b>Maidservant</b> |  |
|--------------------|--------------------|--|

### Conclusion

The study is actually a preliminary note which results the following tentative conclusion. A study of media of interaction in the Javanese priyayi is of importance to get to know the social background and the linguistic facts of the class. The study of the language of the class is of great help for studying Javanese in the frame of understanding the position of this language as a source of building up the vocabulary of Bahasa Indonesia. The priyayi class is a relic of feudal system of Javanese society. The address terms applied in this class are of great importance to study, since they reflect the system of education and the position or status of the members. There are more than twenty address terms. Major patterns are found in this class which seems to be different from those found in English or many other languages. The Javanese priyayi family members never address each other in njangkar, but they use a certain address term. Only the parents address their children with their nickname. There are address terms which are in alternation (e.g. Bapak or Pak with Mas, Ibu or Bu with Jeng, nickname with address term expressing affection). There are also those which are in optional Co-occurrence (e.g. terms like Jeng, Mas, Ndoro, Den Ayu, De). Address terms which are always in Co-occurrence are: Ndoro. In addition to this the class never use some terms in Co-occurrence, suchs: Bapak or Pak and Ibu or Bu.

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