

Meaning and Message of Communication Behaviour of Javanese Ethnic Traders to Prospective Buyers



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ABSTRACT: The phenomenon about the communication behavior of Javanese ethnic traders to prospective buyers at Manonda market, Palu has its own meaning and message because it contains variations in communication practices based on cultural values and habits that are still inherent to a Javanese ethnic trader. These communication practices have an effect on the meaning of the message itself to prospective buyers. The purpose of this study is to determine the meaning of the message caused by the variations of expressions (speech acts) in the communication behavior of Javanese ethnic traders to prospective buyers. This study used a descriptive-qualitative method by taking 5 (five) Javanese ethnic traders as informants who trade at Manonda market, Palu. The informants' criteria have been previously determined by using purposive sampling. Collecting data through participatory observation, interviews, listening, and note-taking. The results of this study revealed that the meaning of message expressed by the Javanese ethnic traders to prospective buyers is more connotative, poetic, metaphorical, and ambiguous. The expression used is a form of euphemism – has a polite meaning, not too sharp but the aim is to disguise the true meaning. The Javanese ethnic traders often express high context culture to prospective buyers.

KEYWORDS: Communication behavior; Javanese ethnic; meaning; message.

INTRODUCTION

Palu City is a small city. This city is the capital of the Province of Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. In this city there are several traditional markets, including Masomba market, Ujuna market, and Manonda market. Manonda Market is the biggest traditional market in Palu city. In this study, researchers took the location of the Manonda traditional market because it is the largest traditional market in Palu City. Another reason is because this market consists of various tribes and ethnicities who sell daily needs of the local society. The buyers also come from various tribes and ethnicities. Assimilation of various tribes and ethnicities in this market create various kinds of social communication behavior in social interaction. Smiles that contain meaning, body language movements that are full of meaning, distinctive voices and tones from both traders and buyers make this condition become interesting to know. If you look at it at a glance, the conditions and behavior of communication both the traders and the buyers are different from the daily conditions in the modern market where the speech and behavior of communication between traders and prospective buyers are limited.

Communication behavior that is practiced in bargaining merchandise is able to have a psychological impact on every potential buyer. This condition is interesting because there are various types of ethnicity, where each ethnic has its own style and character of communication behavior when doing interaction so that it creates to the meaning of messages and social behavior of its own. This situation also happens because it cannot be separated from the existence of various kinds of cultural dimensions, norms, customs, habits, and variations in speech of each individual, consciously or unconsciously bringing a uniqueness in communication between traders and prospective buyers.

Sometimes traders and prospective buyers touch each other and measure the depth of each other's hearts through communicative interactions so that sometimes attitudes arise in the form of joy, laughter, and even the possibility of emotional attitudes from both parties. Apart from that, communication behavior can also lead to closer, and mutually respectful in social relationships which can ultimately create to an understanding that is mutually beneficial socially and economically.

The Manonda traditional market, Palu has a unique culture because it is caused by various ethnicities and races who come to buy and likewise the traders in this market sometimes produce social communication habits and behaviors that are still attached to the culture and habits of each individual. This is where the importance of understanding the meaning of an expression and communication behavior of each individual who is different from ethnicity and race. In the interaction, traders and prospective

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buyers often use two or three types (variations) of language at once in interacting. The use of language variations is not only influenced by the linguistic factor itself, but can also be influenced by social factors and the situation in which social communication occurs. In the communication behavior expressed by both parties (both traders and prospective buyers) of course there is language in the form of expressions or dictions and the accompanying meanings. Thus, language and meaning are actually two different things, both in terms of meaning and substance.

In terms of substance, language is only a symbol used in the communication process. As a symbol, language is 'arbitrary' and 'irreversible' (Ibrahim, 2005). Furthermore, Deddy Mulyana (2002) explains that 'arbitrary' is a feature of language as something that is diffuse, arbitrary, and varied according to the agreement of the person who uses it for the meaning he wants. Therefore, we get many words or terms in the same language, but they have different meanings. It is further explained that 'irreversibility' is a characteristic of language as something that always has a certain influence in every communication. This means that every language and communication behavior that we do always has an influence or effect on other people.

Realizing that language is only a symbol used in the communication process (transmission of communication), then the language or symbol is not actually what is to be exchanged in communication, but the substance that is exchanged is actually the meaning behind the symbol. If meaning is a substance in communication, then meaning must be obtained from the communication process carried out by someone. 'Words don't mean people's means', such a communication is expressed to remind us about language and meaning in communication (Ibrahim: 2005). These words reminds us that words (language) actually have no meaning, but it is humans or people who give meaning to the language or the words that sound through the communication behavior they play. When communication takes place, at least two people give meaning to the communication, namely the 'sender' (communicator/sender of the message), and the 'receiver' or communicant/message recipient.

Communication behavior in the form of verbal communication and forms of nonverbal communication create to linguistic symbols in the form of variations and dialects, of course it will also create to its own meaning at certain area which can lead to various understandings and interpretations because it is influenced by differences in culture, norms and customs of each ethnic group. Language and communication behavior between individuals and individuals can cause mutual influence both in the form of language variants (code) in speech acts which have implications for the function and meaning generated. Everyone who lives in a different socio-cultural environment always has a different way/ability to communicate with one another. Therefore, the way humans communicate also shapes culture as in the view of Edward T. Hall (1979) 'communication is culture and culture is communication'. Thus, culture, norms, and habits have an influence in all aspects of human life. Poetic and metaphorical speech acts (characterized by parables of words that contain meanings that are not true) are widely practiced in communication behavior in the form of interactions where more connotative meanings (Jamiluddin, 2019)

The use of the meaning of the word is also related to the style of speech. This style or distinctiveness of speech by Edward T. Hall (1976) and Mulyana (2008) is called high context culture and low context culture. Low context culture is defined by verbal messages that are explicit, direct, straightforward, and frank. The principle is the same as what is said, for example 'yeah', 'yes', 'ye', and so on, means „agree“. In the context of high culture, Mulyana (2008) explains that by using contextual communication (situation), the verbal message is implicit, vague, and ambiguous, for example 'cheap ma'am', 'different elsewhere', 'special prices', and so on. The speech act expressed contains connotative meaning. It is different with using a low context culture, communication behavior that is practiced in interacting uses short, dense, and clear speech that leads to a message meaning. The speech act that is expressed contains denotative meaning, which is directly related to the actual meaning.

Widel Johnson in Devito (1997) describes there are several theories of meaning that must be understood properly. First, meaning does not lie in words but in humans (words don't mean people's mean). The words that someone uses in communicating are actually only as a means to convey certain meanings that they want to be exchanged. Second, meaning is always changing while words are relatively static. Therefore, we can see the different meanings of the same word (term) at different times and places. Third, meaning always needs a reference. Fourth, the meaning is not limited in number, while the words in a language are very limited. Fifth, meaning is only partially communicated. This is because there are many aspects that accompany the interactive communication process that takes place.

In this study, the researchers analyzes and describes qualitatively about the meaning and message caused by the variation of speech acts in the communication behavior of Javanese ethnic traders to prospective buyers at Manonda Palu Market. These types of speech acts can be interpreted based on the understanding and interpretation between the communicator and the communicant. This study is in the perspective of the sociology of communication that deals with social factors that are reciprocal with language, such as social behavior, individual communication behavior, social adaptation, and speech act behavior in interacting. In the sociology of communication, communication behavior in interacting is influenced by socio-economic aspects, culture, norms, and customs so as to create to individual communication behavior that varies both from the linguistic aspect and its variations as well as in the meaning of messages contained in speech acts in a speech event. . Likewise, Purwadi (2011) states

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nonverbal communication behavior in the form of body language can also create to the meaning of its own message because it is influenced by culture, norms, and habits of a person in behaving to others.

METHODS

This research was descriptive-qualitative. It is in the form of written description and oral utterances of people and the observed behavior, namely the communication behavior of Javanese ethnic traders to prospective buyers in Manonda market, Palu, Central Sulawesi. Therefore, this type of research study was an ethnographic study of communication. Kuswarno (2008) states that the ethnographic study of communication is a study that can describe, explain and build relationships from the categories of data found. Spradly (1997) suggests that the essence of this study is an effort to understand the meaning of an action or social behavior of people who communicate/interact. Furthermore, it is stated that this understanding of meaning can be obtained through communication between one another and the behavior caused. The research steps carried out and used were a library research and a field research. The location of this research is in Manonda Market, Palu, Central Sulawesi and its surroundings. Although the traders in this market are multi-ethnic, the researchers only took Javanese ethnic traders as informants of this research study. The determination of informants was carried out purposively, which was carried out with certain purposes by selecting and assigning 5 (five) informants of Javanese ethnic traders in Manonda Market, Palu and its surroundings. In determining who the 5 informants are, the researcher first determined the first informant in the field as a "gatekeeper", namely someone who is recognized as part of the Javanese ethnic traders community who trades in this market. Therefore, this 'gatekeeper' is an ethnic Javanese who really knows the condition of other informants in Manonda Market, Palu. This 'gatekeeper' has requirements where he has been selling for a long time (approximately 6 years), uses Javanese language in his daily life with his family, and is approximately 30-50 years old. He has a great influence on fellow Javanese ethnic traders, and he is communicative. Before the 'gatekeeper' looks for and determines the other 4 informants, the researcher has provided criteria that must be met to select and determine other informants to the 'gatekeeper', namely Javanese ethnic traders who have been selling at Manonda Market for about 6 years, the place is relatively crowded, and the informant at least graduated from junior high school and communicative.

Data collection techniques was carried out in natural conditions (not artificial), holistic and integrative, therefore the main data collection techniques used the instruments of observation, interviews, listening, and taking notes. Data analysis technique used inductive/qualitative data analysis triangulation from the selected data results.

Therefore, the researchers used ethnographic study of communication.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher explained the results of the study and discussed simultaneously them, then analyzed and described in order to get a clear description of the results of this study.

Meaning and Message of Utterances Produced by Javanese Ethnic Traders to Prospective Buyers

The informants of this research are Javanese ethnic traders who sell vegetables and the like as well as fruit sellers at Manonda Market, Palu. Javanese ethnic traders who sell these types relatively many compared with Javanese ethnic traders who sell other types of merchandise. In their daily communication behavior in the market, they use verbal types of communication and nonverbal types of communication.

The results of the study found that in verbal communication, ethnic Javanese traders use Indonesian to prospective buyers with Javanese accentuation and sometimes use Kaili and Bugis languages, but only in two or three words. In nonverbal communication always shows a happy, cheerful face with a smile symbol and respect for anyone, especially to prospective buyers. Respect is the Javanese way of carrying themselves, always shows respect for others.

The result of the study found that when prospective buyers came from the same ethnic, they generally chose the same language in interaction, but if the prospective buyers came from other ethnicities, the traders sometimes used code mixing and code switching in interaction. The traders are accommodating, flexible, and informative, and show a sense of familiarity to potential buyers. In the process of this interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors that are practiced and creates a cheerful atmosphere.

The result of the study reveal that the poetic speech acts used are characterized by figurative meanings or not actual meanings. The utterances used, like "*Seandainya aku punya kebun dan sayap sendiri, saya akan kasih murah...bu!*" (In English: *If I had my own garden and wings, I would give it cheap.....mom!*), "*Ini bu!., segar, sesegar bunga melati, hee*" (In English: *This..mom, fresh as fresh as jasmine flowers, hee*). Typical figurative words are generally in the form of special expressions or utterances that are deliberately embellished through word choices (diction). However, the research findings also obtained data that words or poetic speech acts do not only have good intentions. Ethnic Javanese traders also often use the beauty of language or speech acts

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to insinuate and criticize potential buyers with metaphorical expressions. Variations in the expressions found in this study, among others,

Wah, wa... tidak bisa bu, bisa-bisa saya gulung tikar, bu" (In English: 'wow, can go out of business, ma'am!, 'waah...can I go bankrupt ma'am!'), „*carilah di-tempat-tempat lain, bu!*" (In English: 'other places can be found .. ma'am"), and others

The result of the study revealed that ethnic Javanese informants were friendly to anyone. This friendliness is social capital when communicating and interacting with potential buyers. Based on the results of the research, the Javanese ethnic traders (informants) always smile at their prospective buyers, even though the potential buyers in bidding for merchandise are too low and sometimes potential buyers make unfavorable expressions, such as 'waaah! mas... sayuran tidak segar lagi, mas'" (In English: *Waaa, mas..the vegetables aren't fresh anymore!!*), „*sayur kemarin yach mas!*), (In English: "yesterday's vegetables.... sir!!), and so on. Such a phrase of course makes it uncomfortable, but the Javanese ethnic trader informant still answered with a smile to the prospective buyer and responded with the phrase 'Besok aja bu, aku akan datangkan seuntai yang segar dan harum mewangi. Tunggu aku disini bu, yach besok!' (In English: „tomorrow, ma'am!!!, I'll bring you a fresh and fragrant strand, wait for me, ma'am!here), „*Saya akan buat mimpi bu jadi kenyataan bu, sedihlah aku kasihan dengarnya*" (In English: *I'll make a dream mom'..don't worry..I'm sad to hear that*'). Trader informants interpret that the buyer is a king who must be served with patience and smile in the face of unfavorable expressions.

The results of the study found that in communication, many expressions are humorous and full of deep meanings. Traders interspersed with speech acts that entertain potential buyers by using *euphemistic expressions* with the intention of joking, so that a cheerful and relaxed communication process occurs. However, sometimes it is difficult to interpret the expressions used by the Javanese ethnic traders (informants) because they contain vague and even ambiguous meanings. The utterances expressed are "*mari-mari bu yang baik hati*" (In English: *Lets be kind mother*), "*Pasti bu senang beli lombok ini, murah disana-sini*" (In English: *You must be happy to buy this Lombok . it's cheap here and there*)

Based on the results of observations and interviews, information was also obtained that the communication behavior applied was *accommodative* and *persuasive*. Accommodative is interpreted as the attitude of a trader who is very easy to adapt himself to the wishes of prospective buyers in interacting, while persuasive is interpreted as an utterance that is expressed that is convincing and persuading potential buyers to follow and want to buy the goods offered by the merchant. Therefore, traders must balance it with good, accommodating, and persuasive ways of communicating behavior to potential buyers, both in the form of verbal communication and nonverbal communication. The utterances expressed were "*Wah, pasti murahlah, „berapa kilo ibu?, „Bisa juga satu, atau perkilo*" „*yang ini biasanya manis*" „*masak semua ibu*" (In English: *That must be cheap!*, „*How many kilo mom?*"), "*Could be one" or per kilo*", „*This one is usually sweet*", „*ripe all, mom!*).

Data from interviews and direct observations of traders, the study revealed that communication behavior in the view of prospective buyers says that the Javanese are flexible, friendly, gentle, easy to get along with, and easy to talk to. Prospective buyers already know based on this ethnic 'prior knowledge' from the culture and habits that are practiced by the Javanese in communicating to potential buyers, which are soft-spoken, polite, always use pseudo-language, disguised and full of meaning in interacting. This is in accordance with the research findings of Titis Gandariani (2017) which states that the communication behavior of Javanese ethnic traders likes to speak softly, politely, but their expressions are always vague and full of meaning. For the Javanese themselves, the most important use of language is to keep prioritizing how communication can remain smooth, so that the use of soft language is not a problem, especially to the interlocutor (prospective buyers)

Ethnic Javanese traders like to speak softly in communicating not without reason because it is inherent in their culture and philosophy of life which is influenced by the attitude of life of the ancient Javanese (traditional Javanese) who often actualize their attitudes and life behavior in communicating in a disguised form, which is more states something indirectly so that it is difficult to know what is really meant and desired from the speech. One example of research results revealed in interacting, namely the speech '*iyah*', '*nggih*', '*yah*', '*enggeh*'" (In Bahasa: *iyah, nggih, yah, enggeh*), and so on. The expressions or utterances spoken by these Javanese ethnic traders in interacting are sometimes misinterpreted by prospective buyers which are often interpreted as '*agree*', but have other meanings.

The findings of this study revealed that *locutionary acts* (motivational words), or *illocutionary acts* (acts of communicating through empathic expressions, such as praising) and *perlocutionary acts* (words giving directions) are always practiced by Javanese traders in interacting with prospective buyers. All types of actions that have a positive impact on the decision to take the merchandise. For the Javanese, according to Titis Gandariani (2017), language is like a verbal art, namely a creative work that uses aesthetics orally. Javanese traders love to use beautiful words eventually become a tradition of polishing, changing, and sometimes also blurring meaning, adding to the language spoken looks like a style of language that is disguised and full of

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meanings. These are traditions and customs of Javanese ethnics in their daily communication behavior, which also seem to be practiced by them in interacting with prospective buyers.

In nonverbal communication behavior, many traders practice body language that shows friendliness and courtesy in introducing and offering their wares. A smile accompanied by a lowered body movement (body language) that hints at directing prospective buyers is a form of nonverbal communication in interacting. However, both verbal communication and nonverbal communication are practiced simultaneously to prospective buyers. Communication behavior in this kind of interaction is a form of appreciation to prospective buyers, so that prospective buyers feel valued and happy.

Speech acts tend to be individual symptoms, psychological in nature and determined by the speaker's language in dealing with certain situations. These speech acts are part forms or variants in language that still have a pattern that resembles the general pattern of the induction language. Sumarsono (2004) explains that a speech act is a piece of speech that is produced as part of social interaction. The variety of speech or language variety already exists to fulfill its function as a means of communication and interaction in diverse community activities.

The results of the study obtained the fact that the speech acts conveyed by Javanese traders to prospective buyers from the data obtained in interacting were rather *vague* and *ambiguous* which contained many *connotative meanings* in the perspective of understanding prospective buyers. But behind that, the trader actually intended the speech as a form of 'joke' so that prospective buyers were more relaxed and felt close and familiar with the trader. The speech act expressed by this Javanese trader when interacting is a form of communication that is beautified in meaning so that the other party (prospective buyer) feels happy. The communication behavior of Javanese ethnic traders always pays attention to the interlocutor so that the speech acts that are practiced must be beautiful and contain humor.

The research findings also revealed that the variation of Javanese ethnic traders' speech acts is like managing verbal art, namely in *poetic* form and in many *metaphorical* forms. If it is related to the research findings above, it can be stated that Javanese ethnic traders apply a '*high context culture*'. According to Edward T. Hall (1976) and Mulyana (2008) what is called a high context culture is verbal messages are implicit, vague, and ambiguous. The utterances expressed by the traders contain connotative meanings that are *poetic* and *metaphorical*.

Djajasudarma (2009) states that the meaning of a sentence often does not depend on the grammatical and lexical system, but depends on the rules of discourse. The meaning of a sentence, both its choice of diction and its grammatical arrangement often cannot be understood without considering its relationship with other sentences in a discourse. Likewise, in variations of the language of buying and selling interactions, many prospective buyers do not understand the speech or sentences spoken by traders in the market, even though the purpose of the speech or expression of the sentence has a specific purpose. However, in the later process, the meaning of words and communication symbols will gradually be able to be interpreted by potential buyers, as LittleJohn (2008) states that meaning is an important communication result. A person's meaning is the result of interaction with other people. Stewart L. Tubbs and Sylvia Moss (2008) simply divide the meaning of the speech act into two, namely denotative meaning and connotative meaning. Denotative meaning is the primary association that a word has for most members of a particular linguistic society. While connotative meaning is secondary that a word has for one or more members of society. Meanwhile, Mulyana (2008) revealed that the denotative meaning is the actual or actual (factual) meaning as in the dictionary. Therefore, denotative meaning is more public. Many words that have multiple meanings or connotative meanings are subjective.

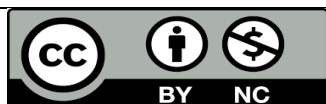
The results of the study also reveal that the language and speech acts used to motivate prospective buyers to buy merchandise from Javanese ethnic traders often use *euphemisms*. According to Tubb and Moss (2008), euphemisms are words with wings (full of meaning) so that they sound more polite, and their meanings are not too sharp. Traders use euphemistic speech, generally to disguise the real meaning so that there is a shift in the degree of the word.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the research is that the meaning of the message expressed by Javanese ethnic traders to prospective buyers is more connotative, poetic (characterized by word play that is processed to be beautiful and humanist), metaphorical, and ambiguous. The expression used is a form of euphemism - has a polite meaning, not too sharp but the aim is to disguise the true meaning and Javanese ethnic traders often apply high context culture of communication behavior to potential buyers. Based on the conclusion, the researcher suggests to other researchers to focus more on communication behavior towards certain community groups at different loci. This kind of research is important to do to eliminate community complications caused by communication behavior.

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