

## Conference Paper

# Banter Politeness from Cultural Perspective (Analysis of Palembang Malay Language)

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## Abstract

This research examines the culture of politeness of speech acts banter in the Palembang language. This is a qualitative research by using an ethnographic communication approach that is applied to see the communication patterns in social groups, in this case the speech acts in bantering in the Palembang language. The techniques used for data collection are documentation of recordings, notes, and interviews. The results show that banter politeness for people in Palembang accumulated in several factors. In terms of banter (material), banter activities occur in almost all aspects of life because basically banter is explored from the phenomenon of the variety of life.

**Keywords:** culture of politeness, Palembang language, politeness banter

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Received: 6 April 2018  
 Accepted: 3 May 2018  
 Published: 26 July 2018

Publishing services provided by  
**Knowledge E**

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Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the ISLLE 2017 Conference Committee.

## 1. Introduction

The joke (banter) phenomenon is the result of the pouring out of personal expression in speech. This expression is born from the work of the brain in exploring the form of jokes as one of the language processes. Jokes (banter/mocking impoliteness) are interpreted as a form of speech characterized by humor that contains various forms of stimulation that potentially provokes a smile or laugh from the audience. Banter may contain many conversational implicatures as a result of deviations from the principles of cooperation and politeness, although the perpetrators may be unaware [1]. The problem with the study of banter is that most of it has been written by nonlinguists. For example, Blake Ashforth is a professor of Management at Arizona State University and Florencia Cortés-Conde is working with the Department of Spanish. Barbara Plester is with the Faculty of Business and Economics, whereas Janet Sayers is a faculty member for the School of Management at Massey University in New Zealand. Even though the majority of the earlier work focused on banter seems to have been conducted by nonlinguists, I must mention the Banter Principle by Leech and the study on the social

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use of sarcasm and banter by Slugoski and Turnbull [2-4]. In Poland, Nowik has done research on banter in connection with the Relevance Theory of Sperber and Wilson [5, 6]. I agree with her regarding the difficulty in defining what banter is.

Banter is a way of offending (mock impoliteness). The so-called "preliminary principles" are, of course, "less important" when compared to other rhetorical principles. However, this principle is often manifested in casual conversations, especially among young people [3]. In banter, the aspect of the politeness of the speakers is rarely noticed. It becomes more interesting when studied more deeply, especially from the cultural aspects that underlie its speech content.

Courtesy banter in a cultural context based on the opinions of some experts: Duranti states that culture is something that is learned, transmitted, passed from one generation to the next through human action, and often in the form of face-to-face interaction through linguistic communication [7]. Brown defines culture as a way of life. Culture deals with the human context of thinking, feeling, and relating to others [8].

Samovar and Porter argue that culture is concerned with human life. Humans learn to think, feel, trust, and work out what is culturally appropriate [9]. Goodenough says that the culture of society consists of knowledge and beliefs run by members of society on the basis of their accepted meaning and role [10].

Kramsch points out the relationship between language and culture, which says that language expresses the reality of culture [11]. However, every member of a society or social group not only expresses their experience, but also creates their experience through language. In this case, community members give meaning to the experience through the media chosen to communicate with each other.

Taylor, in describing language, culture, and society, says that language plays an important role in construction [12]. This happens because every word has an inherent meaning as an idea representative. This means, that the words used are the form of ideas or ideas.

Culture influences communication in many ways. It is culture that determines the timing of interpersonal events, places to discuss certain topics, the physical distance that separates a speaker from other people, and the tone of voice appropriate for a particular conversation.

Based on the above description, when you look at the number of linguistic phenomena that exist, banter activities have a certain meaning in the social order in society. In addition, the main thing that concerns the researcher is that speech acts teasingly tend to violate existing norms of politeness. Nevertheless, the researcher assumes that in

the self-esteem contained in the violation of norms of politeness, humor must have rules of politeness that have the values of fairness and acceptability.

## 2. Methods

The method used in this study is a qualitative method with the approach of the ethnography of communication, which is applied to see the patterns of communication acts speech language in developing jokes.

The research data are in the form of speech that contains about cultural values of banter politeness. The next data are the results of interviews with Palembang city residents, who are exploring their understanding of information about banter and responding to the quality of banter show contrasted with real life phenomenon of most people in Palembang. The data collection in this research is done by using the method of referring. The technique used is recording. In addition, other techniques are also used in the form of skillful techniques, i.e. conversations conducted between researchers and speakers in the form of interviews [13].

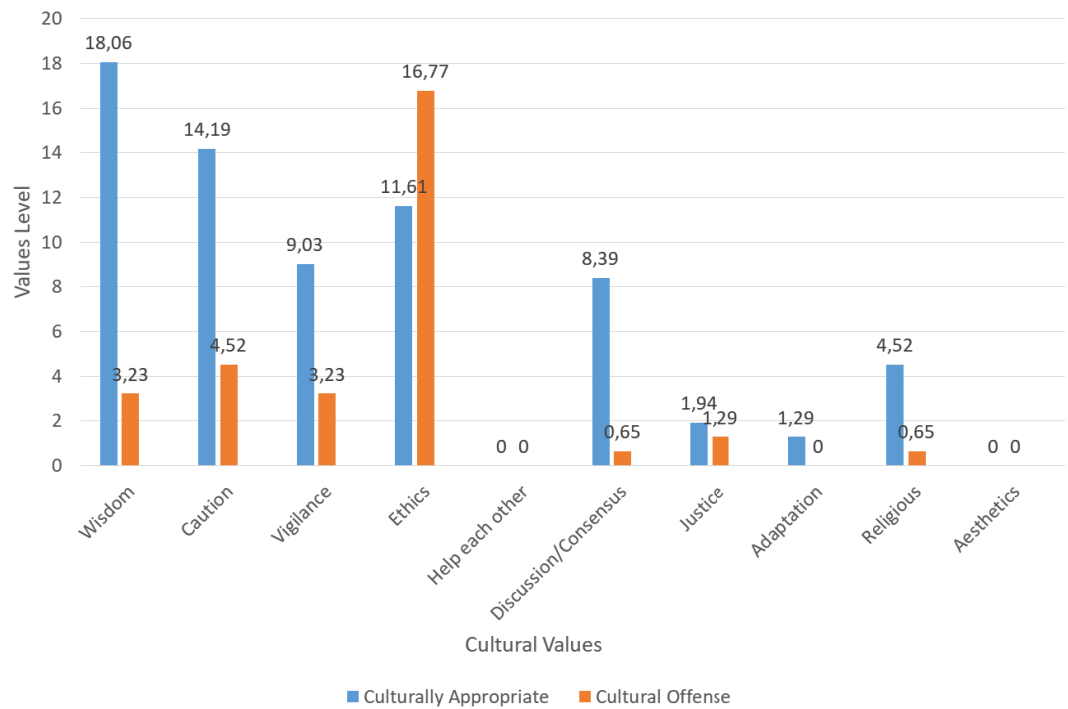
The method used to analyze the data of this research is discourse analysis, whose data have been presented in the form of data transcription from the processed video recording [14].

## 3. Results

The results of this courtesy story research are as follows (Figure 1).

By looking at the diagram above it can be seen that in the joking activities of the participants said more dominantly adhere to the culture of politeness type of wisdom. Meanwhile, the violation of the culture of politeness in Palembang is mostly done to the kind of humbleness. In the daily life of the people of Palembang, in joking they actually put forward things that deserve talking about but are inappropriate. The choice of speech that is contrary to the principle of politeness is actually one of the efforts to establish intimacy. But it cannot be denied that the speech is sufficiently strongly inherent in the character of the Palembang community, so it is rather difficult to distinguish whether this is vanity or just a witticism. According to the respondents, the banter of Palembang communities is likely to use speech that disrupts integrities.

In regard to cultural values, the speakers continue to put forward the values of wisdom. The speakers prioritize considerations between appropriate and inappropriate conduct in interacting with others, so that such behavior is positively accepted by



**Figure 1:** The Results of This Story Research.

citizens. But the most striking thing in the use of this banter is ethics violation in various speeches, so it seems that the participants were not able to distinguish between good and immoral effects in human behavior. Exploration of ethical violations is like being the main menu in banter activities.

Consider the following example.

Buyer: *jerukyah?*... (= orange yeah?)

Seller: *iyu jeruk dak katek pulok ngatok emangges. Iyu jeruk ini tigoribu* (= yes oranges. No one

also says mangosteen. Yes these oranges are three thousands

Buyer: *tigoribu?* (= Three thousand?)

Seller: *iyu sekilo tigo ribu, kalo duo kilo limo ribu* (= yes, one kilo three thousand, two kilograms is five thousand)

Buyer: *kalo tigo kilo tigo ribu pas kan?* (= If three kilograms, must be three thousand right?)

Seller: *eeee... dak dapat* (=eeee... cannot)

Buyer: *kurangi dikit hargo tu* (= subtract the price slightly)

Seller: *jadi nak berapa?* (= if so, what price do you want?)]

Buyer: *kalo mak itu, aku ambek sekilu bae* (= if so I'll take one kilo only)

Seller: *ehehehe panjang libar beli sekilu* (= a lot of chit-chat, just one kilo only)

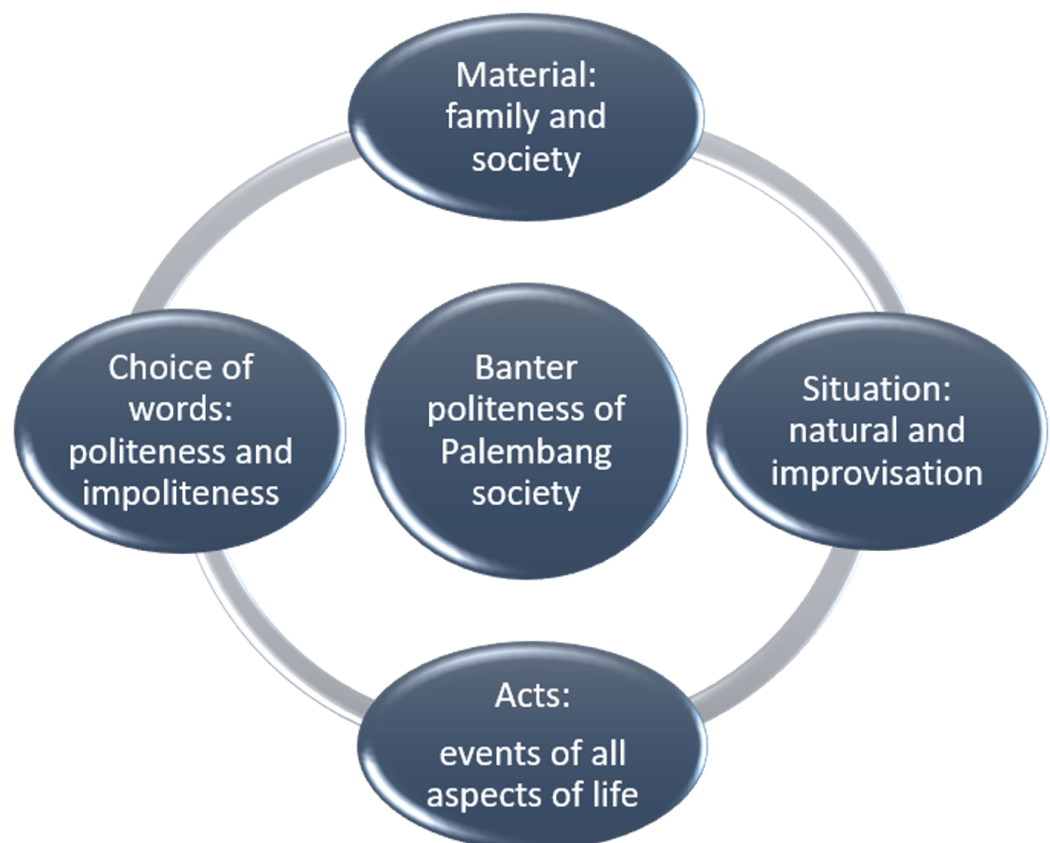
Buyer: *iyo iyo cepet dikit* (= yes.. yes hurry)

Seller: *iyo jerok ini dari Bali sano baru dating rasok umaseh baru dalam perjalanan*

(= yes, these oranges are from Bali. I think they've just arrived, they're still fresh.)

The banter amongst the Palembang people is part of a culture that is meant to foster intimacy among people. In principle, the banter reflects the behavior of the people of Palembang in general. Speech patterns and sample behavior are representative of most of the Palembang community. Banter is used on various occasions and in a variety of situations.

From the findings on the politeness of banter, a diagram can be created to clarify the culture of banter politeness that exists (Figure 2).



**Figure 2:** Factors that Accumulated Banter Politeness for Palembang's People.

From the diagram above it can be seen that banter politeness for the people of Palembang accumulated in several factors. From the point of view of banter (material), banter activities do not occur only in one or more aspects of life. Overall human behavior can be used as banter because basically jokes are explored from the phenomenon of the variety of life. Banter is a neutral conflict in the family as well as in society. But sometimes banter occurs because of the conflicts that are created. The results of observations and interviews conducted show that banter is popular because of conflicting products that appear. The relationship between family relatives is the topic of banter material that is often encountered.

Furthermore, in terms of the situation of banter, there are two situations in general, namely a situation that is deliberately created because the participants need entertainment or joy from the speech activity, or the result of events that flow naturally from a subject. The first situation appears because there is a stiffness or material freeze to maintain the quality of the conversation. In this situation Palembang people are accustomed to liquefying the atmosphere by provoking banter that is created outside the context of the actual conversation material. Meanwhile, banter that is naturally created from the topic of the ongoing conversation is born from the personal character that is already accustomed to living in the context of the existing Palembang community. In situations such as this, conversation that carries any theme will usually be inserted by banter as an effort to provide a continual refresher for the conversation to continue and the spirit.

Meanwhile, banter activities do not look at the specific context to make it happen. Mainly concerning certain aspects. In other words, in almost every aspect of life, Palembang people are accustomed to making it a land in which to banter. Of course, by not reducing the values of seriousness when there is a special section that requires sincerity. The usual life play is when social contact occurs in the surplus of each speaker from the socioeconomic status standpoint. At a time like this, the banter will be created naturally with the ultimate goal of elevating self-esteem.

Finally, as regards the aspect of vocabulary selection when joking, the use of words both containing the values of politeness and violating the norms of politeness in general can be found. In the Palembang community, the placement of words that are generally judged as negative vocabulary because they are not in accordance with existing norms of politeness is considered a common practice in joking. They indicate arrogance, mockery, and self-defense, and so on are the appropriate choice of culture to represent the ongoing activity of banter.

However, further researches point out that the interview results also highlight that Palembang people also have castes. A person who is from the *Raden* caste was born to be a leader and must be authoritative and have the power to make a decision. Banter is also limited and lightweight. After the next "caste" raden is "Pack." The person holding the Pack is born as a merchant. The term likes to pack-packed. Next is *Kiagus* whose strata region belongs to a group of *kiayi* or *ulama*. Next there is *Masagus* or *Masayu*. This group is a *priyayi*, who has physical advantages. Handsome or beautiful. Well, this last is a class of ordinary people who do not have a title and are put in the group "si," for example the Ahmad, the Badu. This "si" group is a group that feels the blood of a descendant of nobility even though socially it has the status of an ordinary society. It is this "si" group that likes to joke and behave like a *priyayi* and feel like a person of rank or wealth.

#### 4. Conclusion

Banter is commonplace everywhere. The findings on the banter of the Palembang community, which were then concretized with the opinion of the community from various circles and ages, have been imaging Palembang community groups on one side of social life. When it is associated with the politeness aspect that has its own rules of procedure that contains universal signs of politeness, banter has its own sphere that is categorized as impoliteness. The disagreement in joking is politeness from the jaw's perspective. This is what is found in the banter used in the Palembang community, which is a local culture as a manifestation of the incompetence of *wong Palembang* in fostering the integrity of social relationships with others. Given that from time to time there are many changes, ranging from population distribution and migration language and culture between regions, inter-provinces and even interstate, the banter phenomenon will certainly experience a shift, both in terms of banter style and choice of words and conversation topics. Thus the implication for the cultural development of the Palembang community is that because of the possibility of social behavior changes that lead to the implications of globalization, the style of banter will become something that is universal and will change the joking style of the people of Palembang today.

#### Acknowledgement

Authors would like to thank PGRI Univeristy Palembang for facilitated this research.

## Conflict of Interest

Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this research.

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