

Abstract for ISLOJ3

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Title:

A variety of codes as speech levels in the family domain: an intergenerational family interaction.

This paper presents two Chinese families of four generations who live in Surabaya, East Java. Their code choice behaviour shows that different age cohorts employ different codes to different interlocutors for different reasons. The speakers consider that some particular codes are more polite for use with particular speakers of particular generations. Taking into account the age distance between interlocutors, their family status (role-relations), their language behaviour and attitude towards their addressees from different generations, their code choice behaviour reflects degrees of formality which exist between different pairs of speakers-interlocutors. I argue that in their interpersonal interaction, speakers choose codes that are associated with high formality and prestige to index a high degree of politeness towards some addressees. On the other hand, speakers choose codes identified with relative informality to index solidarity and familiarity with addressees. This use of different codes to index degrees of politeness to different interlocutors can be seen as directly analogous with the use of speech levels in a language like Javanese.

This paper concentrates mostly on the subjects' practice of using different codes to index degrees of politeness, hence similar to the use of speech levels, in their interactions within the family domain. Due to the different languages of instruction they have in their schooling (Chinese, Indonesian and/or English/German) different subjects have different sets of codes (languages) functioning as speech levels. The language(s) and/or language varieties involved among others are standard Indonesian, colloquial Indonesian, Javanese, Hakka, Mandarin, Chinese Malay/Indonesian, English and German.