

ADLOCUTION IN FRENCH AND MALAY IN PARALLEL

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SINOPSIS

Dalam makalah ini kami ingin menunjukkan masalah-masalah yang dihadapi oleh seorang pengguna bahasa apabila dia ingin memanggil seseorang, baik dalam Bahasa Malaysia maupun dalam Bahasa Perancis. Empat bidang boleh diteliti, iaitu: bidang istana, bidang sastera, bidang politik dan bahasa sehari-hari. Kami mencoba menerangkan bagaimana pengucap-pengucap menyelesaikan masalah-masalah tersebut dalam kedua-dua bahasa tersebut.

SYNOPSIS

In this article we would like to point out problems faced by the speaker when he wants to address someone either in Malay or in French. Four main areas have been considered, these are: the royal area, the literary area, the political area and daily conversation. We will try to explain how speakers solve these problems in the two languages.

The French and Malay languages, although quite unrelated historically, geographically and linguistically, seem to be rather close in one field: that is in their abundance of forms of address. Such a situation leads the speaker to the problem of choice. Which title or which personal pronoun should be used? This choice is not a simple one. We remember the case of a girl student who did not know how to address the gate-keeper of her hostel. He was just a few years older than she was, so he could not properly be called *Pakcik* (Uncle); but the girl would not call him *Abang* (Elder brother) either, because that would have been too intimate. In French the same problem occurs when the speaker has to make the choice between *Tu* and *Vous*, when he talks to someone. True, these two forms of address (*Tu*, and *Vous*) are not unique to the French language; all Latin and Germanic languages have them. The English Language has kept only the equivalent of *Tu* in the religious field, in which *Thou* is used. But the combinations in Bahasa Malaysia and French are so various that the speaker has a really important choice to make.

The choice made by the speaker depends on two factors: his own social position and the listener's social rank. In French we say *Tu* to some people

and *Vous* to others. In Malay, sometimes *Awak* is used, sometimes it is *Anda* or *Kamu* or *Saudara*. So we will notice a real linguistico-social hierarchy which would enable anyone to guess who the speakers are just by listening to the forms of address they use.

Moreover what can be said by A is not necessarily suitable if used by B. A word of intimacy like *Kau* (You) as it appears in the poem *Pada Wajah yang Merindu* by Nafisah Haji Ismail in *Dewan Sastra* (15 November 1976), can be very rude in a different situation such as *Kau pergi* (Go away). In French we also find this relativity in the usage of personal pronouns: *Tu* can be familiar and intimate in some cases, but it can also be rude and denote a lack of respect. For instance, a warden in a jail would say *Tu* to a prisoner and if a customs officer says *Tu* to a foreigner it can even denote racism. So the question is: who says what to whom?

To try to give an answer, we are going to see successively the four main sociolinguistic areas of the French and Malay speakers.

The Royal Area

Since France had a long monarchical tradition (from the first centuries of the Christian era to 1848)¹ and since Malaysia has not only a Paramount Ruler (*Yang di Pertuan Agong*) but also nine sultans, and therefore nine royal families, such an area deserves to be studied.

Moreover there is a special terminology which one has to use when speaking to and of the king. When the king arrives the words *Keberangkatan Tiba* are used. His anniversary is *Hari Keputeraan*. When speaking to the king the speaker must start with the words *Ampun Tuanku*. There is also a word different from *Berkata* (To say) used by or for the king, i.e. *Bertitah*.

When the king (or the sultan) refers to himself in a speech, he employs the form *Beta* and he calls the listener by his name. When someone speaks to the king, he must use the form *Tuanku* (My Lord) and *Patik* for himself. In a more informal situation, the king uses *Saya* (I) and *Kamu* (You).

In France, Louis XIV (1643–1715) used to address his subjects by using *Monsieur* (Mr.) or *Madame* (Mrs.) followed by the name of the person. Molière, the playwright (1622–1673), used to address the king as *Sire* or *Votre Majesté* (Your Majesty).

In Malaysia, apart from the titles *Tuanku*, given to a reigning sultan or king, *Tengku* (Prince) or *Tunku* (the latter form being used by the royal family of Negri Sembilan), there are quite a large number of other hereditary noble titles both masculine and feminine. This distinction has only been recently introduced in the Malay language through contact with other languages.

1 Except the period 1792–1814 of the Revolution and The Napoleonic era.

Raja is an equivalent of *Tunku* in the state of Perak; *Ungku* is a noble title in Johor, *Tuan* is the Malay translation of the Arabic title *Syed* or *Sharifah* in the state of Kedah, *Habib* is another equivalent of *Syed*. *Cik* and *Ku* are two titles of Kedah. *Nik* (in Kelantan) and *Wan* (in Kelantan and Trengganu) are titles given to people who were living within the compound of a royal family but not of royal blood. *Abang* and *Awang* are two titles used in Sarawak, *Datu* a title used in Sabah.

Usually, for persons with these titles, the common form of oral address is *Encik* or *Cik*.

The Literary Area

In classical Malay literature, *Hamba* (for the first person) and *Tuan hamba* (for the second person) were used as well as *Kekanda* (I) and *Adinda* (You). As for contemporary literature, for instance in poetry, we can find *Ku* (for *Aku*, I) and *Mu* (for *Kamu*, You) used as enclitics in Bahasa Malaysia. In short stories or novels *Aku* is often used. For the second person, as we are going to see later, the name of the person is used.

In French we find the two forms of address (*Tu* and *Vous*) both in classical and contemporary literatures. In *l'Avare* (The Miser), a play written by Molière, lovers use *Vous* but the father says *Tu* to his daughter who says *Vous* to him. Usually the character says *Tu* to his servant who says *Vous* to him. In the novels written by Emile Zola (1840–1902), the *Tu* form prevails since many characters belong to the middle and lower classes. In modern literature, we can find the same differences as we are going to see in the last paragraph.

The Political Area

In Malaysia, in any political meeting the speaker has to address the audience following a decreasing order in nobility and chivalry.² He starts with *Tuanku* and continues with *Tengku*, *Tun*, *Tan Sri* and *Datuk*. For each title there is a corresponding written form of address which is *Duli Yang Maha Mulia* (for the king and the sultans), *Yang Mulia* (for a prince or a princess), *Yang Amat Berbahagia* for a holder of a Tun award, *Yang Berbahagia* for a Tan Sri, *Yang Berhormat* for a Datuk; after the nobility and the chivalry, the speaker names the commoners with *Tuan-tuan* and *Puan-puan* or *Saudara-saudara yang dihormati sekalian*.

In French, the usual form of address in any political meeting is less impressive. General de Gaulle (1890–1970) used to say *Françaises*, *Français* (French women, Frenchmen) at the beginning or at the end of his political speeches. The present incumbent of the Elysée Place in Paris, Valéry

2 Any following speaker has to repeat this list of V.I.Ps.

Giscard d'Estaing is more neutral and addresses his compatriots with *Mesdames, Messieurs* (Ladies, Gentlemen). In Bahasa Malaysia, the order is always *Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan* (Gentlemen, Ladies) and not the other way round.

The late Indonesian President Soekarno (1901–1970), who was considered as one of the best Asian orators of his time,³ used to address his audience as *Saudara-saudara*. Soekarno was addressed by the political title of *Bung* followed by “Karno”. The same title was given to his compatriot Hatta. In Malaysia we have noticed that this title is given to the writer and political leader Kassim Ahmad.

In French we find a distinction when someone addresses an ambassador. If he is the French ambassador, the person would call him *Monsieur l'Ambassadeur* (Mr. Ambassador) but if he is another ambassador, he is addressed as *Excellence* (Excellency). Of course the following pronoun used is *Vous*.

In Sweden there was quite a revolution when a journalist addressed the Prime Minister, Mr. Olof Palme by *Du* (equivalent of *Tu* in French) on September 16th, 1973. The usual form was *Ni* which is much more formal.

Daily conversation

As we have stated earlier, the choice of forms of address in daily conversation in Malay and in French depends on both the speaker and the listener.

Tuan seems to be disappearing (probably because of its colonial connotations) as an oral form of address. It is still used in official letters. *Encik* has therefore succeeded *Tuan*. If *Encik* is used together with a name, it betrays a non-native speaker, for the usual form of address is *Encik* alone or *Cik* followed by the name of the person as in the form *Cikgu* (Teacher) which can apply to either a man or a woman.

For the first person, *Saya* is regarded as formal, polite, and as a matter of fact, it is not often heard. (Yet it is the personal pronoun foreign students learn!). On the other hand, *Aku* is not formal and can even be rude. This is not the case in either Indonesian nor in literature, especially in poetry in which the clitic form of *Ku* is used as *Mu* is used for *Kamu* and *Kau* for *Engkau*. *Aku* is in fairly common use among ordinary people.

The problem arises when one has to address another person as *Kamu*, *Engkau* and *Awak*; the two latter forms being considered quite rude in Kedah. In the other States of Malaysia, *Awak* must be used between people of equal rank or from a superior to an inferior. A teacher would

³ While for instance, Chairman Mao Tse-Tung (1893–1976) was not renowned for his oratorical talents; like the former British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, who came from Yorkshire and had kept his provincial accent, Mao could not make an address without his audience being struck by his Hunan accent.

address his pupils as *Kamu*. We have also noticed during a road safety campaign in Kuala Lumpur posters bearing the word *Kamu* along highways. The sentence "I love you", which is quite simple in English, is in both Malay and French much more complex. It can be translated as *Saya* (or *Aku cinta padamu* or *Saya* (or *Aku*) *cintakan kamu* and in French it can be *Je t'aime* or *Je vous aime* though the latter form is not so frequent.

Anda and *Saudara* which come from Indonesian are more recent in Malay. Their usage is quite definite. They cannot be used if the speaker addresses someone older. *Anda*, as it was stated by Dr. Farid Onn, cannot be an exact translation of *You*.⁴ *Anda* conveys a general meaning. We have noticed, for instance, that commercials on TV Malaysia use *Anda*.

A new form of address has appeared in the sentence: *I pergi rumah you* (I go to your house). The structure of the sentence remains Malay for it is "rumah you" and not "rumah your" or "your rumah" but the pronouns are English. Perhaps the speaker does not really know how to make his choice from the huge quantity of Malay pronouns. The use of these English pronouns which may well be the result of a certain snobbery, is limited to the first and the second persons. One cannot say *I pergi rumah he*, the sentence being *I pergi rumahnya*.

But more often than this recent practise of the use of English pronouns in Malay, Malay speakers turn to the use of terms of family relationships instead of pronouns. Every foreigner is surprised on coming to Malaysia to learn that he (or she) has so many nephews and nieces, for whenever he (or she) visits Malaysian friends, they would ask the children to say "Hello uncle (or auntie)"; therefore terms of family relationships are used in a much broader sense than in Europe.

In Malay, the precision of terms of family relationships is much greater than in European languages.⁵ There is a special term for any member of the family.⁶ For instance, when a child addresses his (or her) mother, the forms *Ibu* (or the short *Bu*), *Mak* or *Bonda* are used. For the father, the forms *Ayah*, *Pak* or *Bapa* are used.

One interesting feature of these forms of address is that they can be used as the first person as well as the second. So the sentence *Abang pergi ke pasar* can mean "I go to the market" (I: the elder brother) or "You go to the market" as it can be said by a younger brother or sister or wife. No European language can use the same form of address for *You* and *I*.

4 See *Berita Harian*, 23 Oktober, 1976.

5 For instance Malay (like Chinese) makes a distinction between the two forms of *We*: the inclusive (which includes the listener) is *Kita*, and the exclusive is *Kami*.

6 Yet *Adik* can apply to both a younger brother and a younger sister. Here the Chinese language is even more precise, since *Adik* has two translations in Chinese, respectively *Di-di* and *Mei-mei* in Pin-Yin. *Abang* on the other hand can also be used for an elder sister in Johor.

7 *Pak* can be used to denote a form of respect. In universities, some professors are called *Pak* followed by their names.

In Malay, the same feature appears with names (usually in a shortened form) such as *Din duduk di sini* which can mean "I (Din or Mohammed Din or Kamaruddin) sit here" or "You sit here" if you are speaking to Din. So while the precision mentioned earlier does exist, it can be altered with this double meaning in which only the context can allow the listener or the reader to understand.

In French, the speaker has also to face a choice not only between the two forms (*Tu* and *Vous*) but also between different possible combinations.

Tu appears as the form full of meaning while *Vous* is more neutral.

Tu denotes familiarity, intimacy, simplicity but can even be unpleasant when a prostitute would say *Tu viens?* (Are you coming?).

Tu is the form two persons would use after having known each other for some time. *Vous* would be used first, then progressively *Tu*. *Nous pouvons nous tutoyer maintenant* (We can say *Tu* to each other now). The sentence *Il tutoie son directeur* (He say *tu* to his manager) shows the trust accorded by the manager to his employee. *Tu* is used by equals who know each other: fellow students in schools and universities, colleagues in an office, fellow members of the Communist Party. Two motorcyclists would say *Tu* to each other when meeting for the first time while two motorists would start a conversation with *Vous*. Democratization seems still far away in languages!

To give a few examples of combinations, let us take a person whose name would be Jean Dupont (Jean being his first name, and Dupont—a very common name in France like Brown in England, Mohammed in Malaysia and Kim in Korea—his last name).

- “Dupont tu ...” is used by people working in the same place: school students, soldiers in barracks, staff in a hospital, workers in a factory.
- “Dupont vous ...” is used by the bourgeoisie and by white collar workers.
- “Jean vous ...” appears between the first two combinations.
- “Jean tu...” is the most intimate form of address.
- “Monsieur il ...” as in the sentence *Monsieur veut-il une biere?* (Would you like a beer?) is a special form of address used in restaurants. The answer cannot be: *Oui il veut une biere fraiche* (Yes he would like a cold beer). Another instance of the use of the third person when speaking to someone can be found in the sentence: *Madame est servie* (Your ladyship is served) which is said by the servant to the lady of the house when the meal is ready.
- “Monsieur Jean ...” is used by a servant when calling or referring to the son of the family.
- Other combinations like “Lieutenant Dupont” or “Pere Dupont” (Father Dupont) are also possible.

In the religious field, languages seem to be less formal: in Malay *Ku* is used when speaking to God. In France, since the late sixties the Roman Catholics have chosen the *Tu* form when addressing God (the Protestant community has always used the *Tu* form to address God).

Ku or *Tu* in religion shows a greater simplicity; the gap between the believer and God seems smaller with the usage of those pronouns.

As we have seen, in both Malay and French, the social positions of the speaker and the listener still play an important part in the choice of the form of address. In French, *Tu* seems to become more and more popular. Though school teachers were never addressed by this form ten years ago, progressively such a form appears more frequently. This tendency is not particular to French but can also be seen for example in Swedish. In Malay, no precise tendency seems to appear and the recent introduction of the usage of the English pronouns *I* and *You* in Malay shows that the speakers either cannot or are unwilling to make their choices from the various forms of address.

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