Conceptualization of Manggarai Society on Power Relationship in Marriage Kinship

Conceptualización de la sociedad Manggarai sobre la relación de poder en el parentesco matrimonial

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RESUMEN

Este estudio investiga la conceptualización de la sociedad Manggarai sobre la relación de poder entre la esposa dadora de familia y la esposa tomadora de familia en el parentesco matrimonial. El marco teórico utilizado en el estudio es ecléctico, ya que combina varias concepciones propuestas en antropología social, sociolingüística y lingüística cultural. La relación de poder entre anak rona (esposa dadora) y anak wina (esposa tomadora) es asimétrica, ya que anak rona como esposa dadora tiene mayor poder que la anak wina como esposa tomadora. La relación asimétrica de su poder se realiza en las formas y significados del lenguaje que emplean en muchas expresiones verbales.

Palabras clave: Conceptualización, esposa dadora, parentesco matrimonial, relación de poder, esposa tomadora.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the conceptualization of Manggarai society on power relationship between wife giver and wife taker in marriage kinship. The theoretical framework used in the study is eclectic as it amalgamates a number of conceptions proposed in social anthropology, sociolinguistics and cultural linguistics. The relationship of power between Anak Rona (wife giver) and Anak Wina (wife taker) is asymmetrical, as the Anak Rona as wife giver holds higher power than the Anak Wina as wife taker. The asymmetrical relationship of their power is realised in the forms and meanings of the language they employ in many verbal expressions.

Keywords: Conceptualization, marriage kinship, power relationship, wife giver, wife taker

INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the relationship between Manggarai language and Manggarai culture shared by Manggarai society, members of Manggarai ethnic group living in the region of Manggarai that occupies the western part of the island of Flores in the province of East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia (Bustan et al.: 2017; Bustan & Bire: 2018). As the relationship is so complex in nature that the study focuses on the conceptualization of Manggarai society on power relationship between wife giver or wife-giving family and wife taker or the wife-taking family in marriage kinship, with special reference to the forms and meanings of the linguistic phenomena they employ in the situational contexts of the marriage event. The forms and meanings of the language used by a society as members of a social group may reveal power relationship among and between them because the language in its use as a means of communication can reveal the power of its speakers. The power relationship can be seen in the choice of word or diction and the way of expression, as realised in the use of special terms of address designating polite, respect and honorific behaviours (Hamberger et al.: 2018).

We are interested in conducting this study because the forms and meanings of the linguistic phenomena are specific to Manggarai culture that show the differences in the social role and status they hold that reflect the relationship of power between them. This is in line with the idea of Ng and James (1993) that language as a means of verbal communication is a social institution that contains power (Foley: 1997; Villalobos et al.:2018; Stolz: 2019; Villalobos et al.:2020). Another reason is that the forms and meanings of the linguistic phenomena employed contain a set of rights and obligations for both wife giver and wife taker. The rights and obligations are intertwined with the values of politeness, respects and honours as the control mechanisms or the blueprint for both wife giver and wife taker in ordering and organising their behaviours when communicating with one another to maintain social harmony. This comes closest to the conception of Keesing (1981) that culture is a system of implicit and explicit ideas that underlies and gives meaning to behaviour in society as it contains premises that order and organize thoughts or ideas and feelings (Kushnick et al.: 2016; Da Silva: 2017; Bovensiepen: 2018).

METHODS

Framework

The theoretical framework used in the study is eclectic as it amalgamates a number of conceptions proposed in social anthropology, sociolinguistics, and cultural linguistics.

Social anthropology is a branch of anthropology which explores the relationship between culture and society. The basic rationale is that there is no society living and surviving without culture and, at the same time, culture cannot live and survive without society. The relationship between culture and society is mutual, as Hoijer in Duranti (1997) declared, culture exists in society (culture in society), and society exists in culture (society in culture) (Goodenough: 1964). Culture is explored through the prism of society as members of a social group in order to understand what they make, what they do, what they think, how they live and how they organise social relationships to make their lives meaningful. The meaningfulness of their lives depends on how they manage their behaviours to maintain social harmony (Forth: 2016; Foertsch: 2016).

As the definition and significance of culture vary from school to school, according to Ochs (1988), within the field of social anthropology, most approaches treat culture as a system of implicit and explicit ideas that underlies and gives meaning to behave in society; a system of symbols and meanings; premises that order and organize thought and feeling; a worldview of a society; and a cognitive map. The orientations of the approaches are realised in various aspects that include such social behaviours as political, economic and religious; kinship relations; events; interactions and institutions; values; conceptions of the world; theories of knowledge; procedures for understanding and interpreting. Along with such orientations, it can be identified

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then that culture functions not only to create the distinction between societies as culture is a sense of identity and a symbol of identity for the members of a society and to facilitate the generation of commitment to something larger than one's individual self-interest as culture is social-collective in nature, but also to enhance social system stability as culture functions as a control mechanism or blueprint for the members of society.

The differences between cultures are reflected in a number of elements, and one of the elements is the system of social organisation which is concerned with the pattern of relationship between and among members of a social group. Similar to other elements, the system of social organisation is unique and specific to its parent culture, as reflected in the system of kinship as one of the main concerns of study in social anthropology because it affects the social structure and the social life of the people as a whole. In terms of the pattern of relationship between and among members of a social group, the system of kinship can be identified into two forms or kinds that include blood kinship which is established on the basis of blood ties and marriage kinship which is established on the basis of marriage ties (Lon & Widyawati: 2018; Antonius & Wahyu: 2020).

Apart from blood kinship, different societies share different marriage kinships, and the differences can be identified from the role and social status of wife giver or wife-giving family as a lineage or a family that gives a woman in marriage to another lineage or family and wife taker or wife-taking family as a lineage or a family that accepts a woman in marriage from another lineage or family, as the two families acting as the main participants in marriage kinship. The differences in their social role and status designate how the pattern of relationship in power between them in marriage kinship, whether it is symmetrical or asymmetrical. The differences in their power relationship can be identified from the social aspects of the linguistic phenomena they employ in the situational contexts of the marriage event. Because of giving wife, wife giver holds higher power than wife taker and, to what extent the degree of their power relationship depends on the background and the basis for the formation of marriage ties whether or not they have relationship previously. The degree of their power relationship can be identified by looking at the forms and meanings of the linguistic phenomena that wife giver and wife taker employ when they communicate with one another, especially in the situational contexts of marriage event (Bustan & Bire: 2018; Lon: 2019).

Sociolinguistics, as its name implies, can be simply defined as the study of language in relation to society (Foley: 1997). The basic rationale is that there is no society living and surviving without language and, at the same time, language cannot live and survive without society (Goodenough: 1964). As Hoijer in Duranti (1997) pointed out, similar to the relationship between language and culture, the relationship between language and society is mutual as language exists in society (language in society) and society exists in the language (society in language). Therefore, understanding language in society and society in language means that one has to understand the social network of society in which the language is embedded.

In the perspective of sociolinguistics, language is explored through the prism of society in order to have a better understanding of the norms, expectations, contexts, ways and effects of the language used in communication. In this regard, sociolinguistics views language as a social institution which refers to one of the institutions within which individuals and groups carry out social interactions, according to Foley (1997). Therefore, referring to Burke and Porter, according to Bustan (2017), four basic principles that should be taken into account in the study of sociolinguistics are as follows: (1) different social groups use different varieties of language, (2) the same people employ different varieties of language in a different situation, (3) language reflects the society (or culture) in which it is spoken, and (4) language shapes the society in which it is spoken.

The view shows that society is identified as members of a speech community not only because of using the same language but more important than this is that they also share the same norms both in the use of their language and in the interpretation of the language they use. The norms guide them on how to manage and organise their behaviours in the contexts of living together to maintain social harmony. The norms are realised in the use of honorific, politeness marker when they communicate with one another in a certain context of situation because the same people employ different varieties of language in a different situation. This implies

that the variety of language they employ in a situational context of marriage event is different at a certain level with the variety of language they employ other situational contexts. The contexts of the situation make the linguistic phenomena they employ are specific in the forms and meanings that might reveal not only the differences in their social role and status but also the differences of power relationship.

Cultural linguistics, as its name implies, is one of the new theoretical perspectives in cognitive linguistics which explores the relationship between language, culture and conceptualization. This reveals that cultural linguistics is a new paradigm in cognitive linguistics because (1) it explores language through the prism of culture aimed at uncovering conceptualization ascribed in the cognitive map of its speakers in viewing the world; (2) it hybridizes linguistic anthropology and cognitive linguistics with emphasis on cultural elements of cognition; and (3) it functions as an approach to identify language differences due to cultural differences.

The view comes closest to the conception of Humboldt, as quoted by Foley (1997) that the diversity of languages is not the diversity of signs and sounds, but the diversity of cultures. The conception is line with the theory of linguistic relativity proposed by Sapir (1949) and Whorf (2001) that the varying cultural concepts and categories inherent in different languages affect the cognitive classification of the experienced world in such a way that speakers of different languages think and behave differently. As every language has its own way in viewing the world, therefore, the basic principles that should be taken into account when exploring the relationship between language and culture are as follows: (a) we perceive the world in terms of categories and distinctions found in our native language and (b) what is found in one language may not be found in another language due to cultural differences.

The two basic principles emphasize that the interpretation of meanings stated and implied in the forms of language by a people as members of a social group should be based on their viewpoints as the native speakers of the concerned because the language they employ reflects their culture. This is in line with the conception of Wardaugh (2011) that the culture of a people as members of a social group finds its reflection in their language because when they value certain things and do them in a certain way, they come to use their language in ways that reflect what they value and what they do (Goodenough: 1964). Along with this view, according to Kramsch (2001), people who identify themselves as members of a social group acquire common ways of viewing the world through interactions with other members of the same group. The views are reinforced through institutions like family and other sites of socialization through their lives. Common attitudes, beliefs and values are reflected in the way members of the group use language – for example, what they choose to say or not to say and how they say it. Therefore, the choice of word or diction and way of expression should be taken into account when communicating or interacting with one another in various situational contexts.

In the perspective of cultural linguistics, language is defined as a cultural activity and, at the same, as an instrument to organize cultural activities in other domains. In this regard, the language in its use as a means of communication for a people as members of social group functions as the most visible and available expression of their culture. The view parallels the conception of Brown (1994) that culture is a deeply ingrained part of the very fiber of our being, but language as the means for communication among members of a culture is the most visible and available expression of that culture. The conception emphasizes that language that a people as members of a social group employ functions both as the mirror of their culture and window of their world.

As different people define culture differently, in the perspective of cultural linguistics, culture is defined as the source of conceptualization shared by a people as members of a social group on the basis of their experiences in the contexts of living together for years. The basic rationale is that culture functions as a display illustrating how they organize their ways of thinking about items, behaviors and beliefs or events in the cultural domain. In relation to its function as the source of conceptualization, according to Foley (1997), culture is a cognitive map shared together by a people as members of a social group that contains their cultural knowledge. This supports the insight that there is a close relationship between language and cognition as the main concern of study in cognitive linguistics. The relationship between language and culture shared together

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by members of a social group is reflected in their conceptualization which refers to how they perceive the world on the basis of their experience in the contexts of living together for years. As the conceptualization contains their cultural knowledge, the term conceptualization here refers to cultural conceptualization.

Objectives of the Study

In general, the objective of the study is to describe the relationship between Manggarai and Manggarai culture, as reflected in the conceptualization of Manggarai society on power relationship between wife giver and wife taker in marriage kinship, paying special attention to the forms and meanings of the linguistic phenomena they employ in the situational contexts of the marriage event. Along with the two poles of linguistic signs, the specific objectives of the study are (1) to describe the forms of the linguistic phenomena that wife giver and wife taker employ in the situational contexts of marriage event that reveal their power relationship and (2) to describe the meanings of the linguistic phenomena that wife giver and wife taker employ in the situational contexts of marriage event that reveal their power relationship.

Methodology

This is a descriptive study as it describes the relationship between Manggarai language and Manggarai culture belonging to Manggarai society, as reflected in the forms and meanings of the linguistic phenomena used by wife giver and wife taker in the situational contexts of marriage event that reveal power relationship between them in marriage kinship in Manggarai society. The data were obtained by using ethnographic approach (Foley: 1997; Duranti: 1997). The methods of collecting primary data were observation and interview. Based on the data of observation, we interviewed five key informants representing the members of Manggarai society, selected on the basis of criteria proposed by Mulyana (2002). Besides recording data, some descriptive notes were also taken during observations and interviews. The documentary study was done to collect secondary data. The kinds of documents used as the sources of reference were general documents (books) and special documents (scientific articles, results of research, paper). The data were then analyzed qualitatively by using the inductive method as the analysis was started from the data to the concept or theory, the local-ideographic theory dealing with the conceptualization of Manggarai society on power relationship between wife giver and wife taker in marriage kinship.

RESULTS

The results of the study show that there is a close relationship between Manggarai language and Manggarai culture shared by Manggarai society, as reflected in the features of the linguistic phenomena that anak Rona as wife giver or wife-giving family and anak wina as wife taker or wife-taking family employ when they communicate with one another in the situational contexts of the marriage event. The forms and meanings of the linguistic phenomena they employ are specific to Manggarai culture as they reveal that the social role and status of the Anak Rona as wife giver are higher than those of the Anak wina as wife taker. The differences also designate that the power relationship between the Anak Rona as wife giver and the Anak wina as wife taker in marriage kinship is asymmetrical as the Anak Rona holds higher power than the anak wina.

The forms and meanings of the linguistic phenomena they employ in the situational contexts of marriage event contain a set of rights and obligations for both the anak Rona as wife giver and the Anak wina as wife taker which are intertwined with a set of values involving the values of power, respect, honour and politeness. The values function as the control mechanism or the blueprint for the Anak Rona as wife giver and the Anak wina as wife taker in organising their behaviours when communicating with one another in order to avoid social disharmony. This is because the marriage of a woman or a daughter of the Anak rona with a man or a son of the Anak wina is aimed to knitting marriage kinship relationship between them not for a moment but for life.

It is conceptualised in the cognitive map of Manggarai society that the Anak Rona as wife giver holds prevalence or special right to request dowry to the Anak wina as wife taker whether it is high or low. The prevalence of the Anak Rona to request high or low dowry to the Anak wina as wife taker is realised in verbal expression, Deng eta kanang ata naun, deng wa kanang ata naun 'To fasten sarong above is still smart, to fasten sarong below is still smart'. This verbal expression is a compound sentence that contains two simple sentences as its independent clauses which are syntactically interconnected in their forms. The two independent clauses are (1) Deng eta kanang ata naun 'To fasten sarong above is still smart' and (2) Deng wa kanang ata naun 'To fasten sarong below is still smart'.

The prevalence of the Anak Rona as wife giver to request high dowry to the Anak wina as wife taker mainly is realised in the sentence (1), Deng eta kanang ata naun 'To fasten sarong above is still smart'. The prevalence is reflected in the verbal phrase deng eta 'to fasten above' functioning as the subject of the sentence. The verbal phrase consists of two words as its component parts that include the word (verb) deng 'fastening' as Head (H) and the word (adverb of place or locative marker) eta 'above' as its Modifier (M). The word eta refers to the prevalence of the Anak Rona as wife giver to request high dowry to the Anak wina as wife taker. While the prevalence of the Anak Rona as wife giver to request low dowry to the Anak wina as wife taker is realised in the sentence (2), Deng wa kanang ata naun 'To fasten sarong below is still smart'. The prevalence to request low dowry is reflected in verbal phrase deng wa 'to fasten below' as the subject of the sentence. The verbal phrase consists of two words as its component parts that include the word (verb) deng 'to fasten' as Head (H) and the word (adverb of place or locative marker) wa 'below' as its Modifier (M). The word wa refers to the prevalence of the Anak Rona as wife giver to request low dowry to the Anak wina as wife taker

The Anak Rona as wife giver holds prevalence to request high or low dowry to the Anak wina as wife taker because the Anak rona does not invite the Anak wina to come to take their daughter to be the wife of their son. The members of the Anak wina as wife taker come of their own volition to the Anak rona because they want to knit marriage kinship, as implied in verbal expression, ai bom benta Lamis tara maid ngasang Anak wina weda Rewa Tuke mbaru landing le lumung kudut Genung woe nelu. As conceptualised in the cognitive map of Manggarai society, another reason is that, without giving the daughter of the Anak rona to be the wife of the son of the Anak wina, there will be no birth on the part of the Anak wina. As a result, there will be no offspring for the Anak wina to continue their descendants.

Along with the prevalence of the Anak Rona as wife giver to request high or low dowry to the Anak wina as wife taker, the Anak Rona is also called ine-ame 'parents', a special term used by the Anak wina as wife taker to address the Anak Rona as wife giver. The term ine-ame is a compound word that consists of the word (noun) ine 'mother' and the word (noun) ame 'father' as its component parts. The combination of these two words creates a new form and meaning, ine-ame 'mother-father' that refers to 'parents'. The term of address ine-ame is used by the Anak wina as wife taker not only to show honorific, respectful and polite behaviour to the Anak Rona wife giver but also to designate that the Anak Rona as wife giver holds higher power than the anak wina as wife taker. The basic reason is that, as mentioned earlier, without giving a woman to be the wife, there will be no birth for the Anak wina and, as a result, there will be no offspring of the Anak wina to continue their descendants.

On the other side, being the ine-ame, the Anak Rona as wife giver is obliged to guard the Anak wina as wife taker from time to time. The obligation is conveyed in verbal expression, Ine rinding wie, ame rinding mane 'Mother guards at night, father guards in the evening'. This verbal expression is a compound sentence made up of two simple sentences as independent clauses that include (1) Ine rinding wie 'Mother guards at night' and (2) Ame rinding mane 'Father guards in the evening'. The verbal expression designates that the Anak Rona as wife giver should always pray for the Anak wina as wife taker by asking for the help of God to free the Anak wina as wife taker from various diseases. The pray is aimed at requesting to God that the Anak wina as wife taker should have many offsprings who will continue their descendants. In line with this, the Anak Rona as wife giver is also known as, Mori Keraeng atat itan one tana lino 'God that can be seen on the earth',

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a special term used by the Anak wina as wife taker to address the Anak Rona as wife giver. This term of address is used not only to give show honour, respect and politeness to the Anak Rona as wife taker but also to reveal that the Anak Rona as wife giver has higher power than the anak wina as wife taker in the marriage kinship of Manggarai society.

The Anak Rona as wife giver is also called ulu wae, a special term used by the Anak wina as wife taker to address the Anak Rona as wife giver. The term is a compound word consisting of two words as its component parts that include the word (noun) ulu 'head' and the word (noun) wae 'river'. The term ulu wae is a form of anthropomorphic metaphor in Manggarai language that refers to 'the upper course of a river' or 'spring' The Anak Rona as wife giver is called the ulu wae 'spring' because the life welfare of the Anak wina as wife taker depends greatly on the blessings of the Anak Rona as wife giver. As the anak Rona as wife giver is the ulu wae for the Anak wina as wife taker, it is obliged for the Anak wina as wife taker to always visit the Anak Rona as wife giver in ups and downs. The Anak wina will receive abundant blessings from the Anak Rona as the ulu wae in the form of living fortune in various business and jobs, besides having a lot of offsprings. The term ulu wae implies that the Anak Rona as wife giver is regarded as the source of blessings for the Anak wina as wife taker.

DISCUSSION

Being aware of holding lower social role and status, the term of address that the Anak wina as wife taker uses when communicating or interacting with the Anak Rona as wife taker is mendi anak. In terms of its forms, this term of address is a nominal phrase consisting two words as its component parts that include the word (noun) mendi 'slave' or 'servant' as Head (H) and the word (noun) anak 'child' as its Modifier (M). The term of address mendi anak is used by the Anak wina as wife taker to show polite, respect and honour to the Anak Rona as wife giver that holds higher power than the anak wina as wife taker. Being wife taker, the Anak wina should always perform polite, respectful and honorific behaviours when communicating or interacting with the Anak Rona as wife giver that holds higher power. The aim of showing such behaviours is to maintain social harmony between them because the relationship between the anak Rona as wife giver and the Anak wina as wife taker in the marriage kinship of Manggarai society is not for a moment but for good.

CONCLUSION

There is a close relationship between Manggarai language and Manggarai culture, as reflected in the conceptualization of Manggarai society on the relationship of power between the Anak Rona as wife giver and the Anak wina as wife taker in marriage kinship. As conceptualised in the cognitive map of Manggarai society, the relationship of power between them is asymmetrical as the Anak Rona as wife giver holds higher power than the anak wina as wife taker. The asymetrical relationship of their power is realised in the forms and meanings of language they employ in such verbal expressions as (1) Deng eta kanang ata naun, deng wa kanang naun, designating that the anak rona as wife giver has privilese or special right to determine whether the dowry is high or low that should be requested to the anak wina as wife taker; (2) ende-ema 'parents', the term of address for the anak rona as wife giver because without giving a woman to be wife there is no offsprings for the anak wina; (3) Ine rinding wie, ame rinding mane 'Mother guards night, father guards evening', showing that the anak rona as wife giver is obliged to guard the anak wina as wife taker from time to time; (4) Mori Kraeng ata inan one lino, meaning that that the anak rona as wife giver is regarded as God that can be seen on earth because, without giving a woman to be wife of their son, there is no offsprings for the anak wina as wife taker to continue their descendants; and (5) mendi anak showing that the anak wina as wife taker holds lower power than the anak rona as wife giver.

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