DOI:10.21776/ub.icon_laterals.2016.001.1.09

**Register of Buying and Selling Carnelian Stones:
a Sociocultural Linguistic Analysis**

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ABSTRACT

This research is intended to analyze form, linguistic unit and sociocultural meaning of registers used by buyers and sellers of carnelian stones at souvenir markets in Surakarta City, Central Java, Indonesia. This descriptive and qualitative study is presented within the framework of sociocultural linguistics. To achieve the goal, data on utterances expressing registers of buying and selling carnelian stones were collected through observation and field notes, recordings and in-depth interviewing. The research findings show that (1) forms of registers of buying and selling carnelian stones are utterances which have specific meanings expressed by buyers and sellers, such as *akik lumut* ‘moss agate’, *batu giok* ‘jade’, *batu mirah delima* ‘ruby’, blue sapphire, *bertuah* ‘be fortunated’, *ijolan/tukar tambah* ‘barter’, *karat* ‘carats’, *nego* ‘can be bargained’, etc.; (2) the forms of registers are classified into linguistic units, such as word, phrase, abbreviation and acronym; and (3) the registers play an important role in cross-cultural awareness between buyers and sellers for effective communication.

KEYWORDS: register, buying and selling carnelian stones, sociocultural linguistics

Carnelian stones have ever been loved by many people. The last booming of the stones in Indonesia happened in 2015 where each shop or stall was attended by buyers who wanted to choose and bargain the agates. Most buyers were not doubtful to pay the expensive carnelian stones they like. In the agate shops, buyers act as guests and sellers act as hosts. According to Purnomo (2016), buyers and sellers co-operate

with each other in an interaction to ensure that their speech flows well, and so that each speaker can understand what the other wants through their respective utterances.

The study of typical utterances in use lends itself to the study of register which can be defined as a variety of a language used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting. In this research project, the writers propose to name *registers of buying and selling carnelian stones* for typical expressions commonly used during the buyer-seller interaction.

Up to now, many interesting studies have been done on registers related to buying and selling activities. Fujiastuti (2014) investigated the language variation in buying and selling transaction in Niten Market of Bantul Yogyakarta. Her study shows that the use of typical words followed the goods sold; the phrases used were short and not complete or informal phrases; the use of language variation was affected by age, educational and regional factors. Furri (2014) analyzed register on online buying and selling Blackberry Messenger Application. She found that the morphology process happened in register of online sale in Blackberry Messenger was in the affix forms of prefix *men-*, *di-* and suffix *-nya* in English words along with the abbreviation in the forms of resume, acronym, contraction and fragmentation; the syntactic structure of sentences existed in online sale was in the form of elliptic sentences with subject and predicate deletion; the stylistic variations were in the forms of code mixing between Indonesian and foreign languages, and in the forms of words, phrases and clauses. Hariadi (2016) studied the use of language in buying and selling transaction in small food stalls in Surakarta. He found that either sellers or customers tended to use informal language; the language functions that emerged in the transaction were asking (asking question), answering question, asking to do something, making engagement (agreement) and giving information or explanation; and there were many relations

which were naturally comparable between language features and language functions which were used in the direct transaction.

Furthermore, the following theoretical review will explain register of buying and selling carnelian stones in a new framework of sociocultural linguistics, a subfield of sociolinguistics developed by Bucholtz and Hall (2005).

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Register of Buying and Selling Carnelian Stones

Questions about how typical expressions are used by buyers and sellers of carnelian stones are of interest to a wide range of linguistic researchers. As noted by Purnomo (2016), some definitions of register from general to specific stated by linguists are as follows:

Registers are types of linguistic situation differ from one another, broadly speaking, in three aspects: first, as regards what actually is taking place; secondly, as regards what part the language is playing; and thirdly, as regards who is taking part. These three variables, taken together, determine the range within which meanings are selected and the forms which are used for their expression. In other words, they determine the 'register' (Halliday, 1978).

The linguistic register has been described as linguistic varieties that are linked to occupations, professions or topics have termed *registers*. The register of law, for example, is different from the register of medicine, which in turn is different from the language of engineering, and so on. Registers are usually characterized solely by vocabulary differences; either by the use of particular words, or by the use of words in a particular sense (Trudgill, 2003).

In linguistics, register is one of the many styles or varieties of language determined by such factors as social occasion, purpose and audience. More generally,

register is used to indicate degrees of formality in language use. The different registers or language styles that we use are sometimes called *codes* (Nordquist, 2016).

Register is simply a rather special case of a particular kind of language being produced by the social situation. It is also called stylistic variation (Parker and Riley, 2009). Linguistic register refers to the concept of adapting one's use of language to conform to standards or traditions in a given professional or social situation. Furthermore, Biber (2006) states that a comprehensive linguistic analysis of a register requires consideration of a representative selection of linguistic features. Analyses of these register features are necessarily quantitative, because the associated register distinctions are based on differences in the relative distribution of linguistic features.

Finally, Nichol in Purnomo (2016) divides register into five categories: (1) *intimate register*, the highly informal language used among family members and close friends, and may include private vocabulary known only to two people or a small group, as well as nonverbal cues exclusive to the pair or group; (2) *casual register*, the informal language of a broader but still well-defined social group, and includes slang, elliptical and elided sentences, and frequent interruption; (3) *consultative register*, the moderately formal language that marks a mentor-protégé or expert-novice relationship, such as that between a doctor and a patient or a teacher and a student; (4) *formal register*, the language spoken between strangers or in a technical context; and (5) *frozen register*, the ritualistic or traditional, as in religious ceremonies or legal proceedings. Various registers, therefore, are distinguished by not only the sophistication of vocabulary, but also by the complexity and regularity of grammar and syntax. It is vital to note, however, that register is associated not with the speaker but with the professional or social environment; a person can conceivably, within a

given day, communicate in each of the five linguistic registers in assorted interpersonal interactions.

From the above review, it can be inferred that register is a variety of a language used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting. So, it can be further inferred that registers of buying and selling carnelian stones are varieties of language commonly used during the buying and selling activities for carnelian stone transaction.

Sociocultural Linguistics

Linguists have periodically proposed to bring their studies closer to other fields of social inquiry. Sapir (1929) urged them to move beyond diachronic and formal analysis for their own sake to become aware of what their science may mean for the interpretation of human conduct in general. Thirty-five years later, Hymes (1964) lamented that the socially integrated linguistics Sapir had called for was disappearing. Hymes and others worried those new formal approaches, as well as the push for linguistics as an autonomous field, threatened to once again isolate linguists. At the same time, though, the growth of ethnolinguistics and sociolinguistics offered a venue for the socially engaged linguistics Sapir had called for four decades earlier. After four more decades, just as Hymes (1964) worried that linguistics had been bleached of its association with the study of human interaction in the wake of formalist studies, scholars noted that sociolinguistics in turn had narrowed to denote only specific types of study.

Sociocultural linguistics is used to encompass a broad range of theories and methods for the study of language in its sociocultural context (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005). It is currently used to highlight an awareness of the necessity for interdisciplinary approaches to language, culture and society. For the purposes, sociocultural linguists take an interdisciplinary approach to the study of language and

the social and cultural functions of language use. Sociocultural linguistics is thus the broad interdisciplinary field concerned with the intersection of language, culture and society. Furthermore, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) explain the following:

The scope of sociocultural linguistics is potentially vast, though often includes work drawing from disciplines such as sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, discourse analysis and sociology of language as well as certain streams of social psychology, folklore studies, media studies, social and literary theory and the philosophy of language.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is of a qualitative and descriptive nature. The problems studied concern with describing form, linguistic unit and sociocultural meaning on register in buying and selling carnelian stones used by buyers and sellers at souvenir markets in Surakarta City, Central Java. The writers' position as researchers in this research project is as observers, not interfering in the natural conversations between the buyers and the sellers (non-participated observation).

As stated by Miles and Huberman (1992), descriptive and qualitative method is used as a basic approach and main component of certain social science research. Moreover, Strauss and Corbin (1990) claim that qualitative methods can be used to better understand any phenomenon about which little is yet known. They can be used to gain new perspectives on things about how much is already known, or to gain more in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively.

This study is presented within the framework of sociocultural linguistics which can be defined as the broad interdisciplinary field concerned with the intersection of language, culture and society (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005). To achieve the goal, data on utterances expressing registers of buying and selling carnelian stones were collected

through observation and field notes, recordings, and in-depth interviewing. After that, the data were analyzed based on the form of register, linguistic unit of register and sociocultural meaning of register.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on data analysis to the aspects of form, linguistic unit and sociocultural meaning of buying and selling carnelian stone registers, research findings can be described and discussed as follows.

Form Analysis of Buying and Selling Carnelian Stone Registers

The analysis of buying and selling registers expressed by buyers and sellers of carnelian stones during the transaction shows that forms of utterances have specific meanings. The following is an example of dialog between a seller (S) and a buyer (B).

B: *Berapa harga blue safir itu?* ‘How much is that blue sapphire?’

S: *Yang itu? Seratus.* ‘That one? A hundred (thousands).’

B: *Apa? Mahal amat. Barusan aku lihat yang lebih bagus lebih murah dari itu.* ‘What? Expensive. I’ve just seen better ones for a lot less.’

S: *Mungkin aja. Tapi ini modelnya sangat khusus. Atau cari lainnya, giok atau mirah delima?* ‘Maybe, but this is a very special model. Or find others, jade or ruby?’

B: *Modelnya cantik, tapi kemahalen. Kalau giok berapa?* ‘The model is nice, but it’s very expensive. How about the jade?’

S: *75.* ‘75 (thousands).’

B: *Lima puluh aku bayar.* ‘Make it 50 and it’s a deal.’

S: *Hmm... ya udah lah. Tak kasih paling murah untuk sampeyan.* ‘Hmm ... Well ... O.K. 50 (thousands). That’s the lowest I’ll go.’

B: *He he he. Ini uangnya 50 ya.* ‘Ha ha ha. Here you are ... 50 (thousands).’

S: *Nuwun ya.* ‘O.K., thanks.’

In the underlined expressions, the B and S use registers *blue safir* ‘blue sapphire’, *giok* ‘jade’ and *mirah delima* ‘ruby’ which mean kinds of carnelian stones.

Linguistic Unit Analysis of Buying and Selling Carnelian Stone Registers

The analysis of linguistic units of buying and selling carnelian stone registers shows that forms of the registers are classified into word, phrase and acronym. The following is an example of dialog between a customer (C) and a seller (S).

C: *Mas bisa TT mirah delima, lagi BU nih.* ‘Brother, can I barter the ruby, I need money soon.’

S: *Coba lihat.* (C hands S the ruby). *Mau tuker sama apa?* ‘Can I see? With what (stone) will you barter?’

C: *Masih punya giok nggak?* ‘Do you still have a jade?’

S: *Tu di pojokan, pilih sendiri.* ‘(I have some) at the corner, choose by yourself.’

C: (C chooses some jades). *Yang ini deh Aku minta disusuki 300 aja.* ‘This is what I want Please give me 300 (thousand rupiahs).

S: *Aku beraninya 250. Deal ya, ni tak kasih uangnya.* ‘I can give you 250 (thousand rupiahs). It’s deal and this is the money.

C: *Ya udah lah.* ‘It’s okay.’

In the underlined expressions, the C and S use registers *giok* ‘jade’ and *deal* which are classified into words. They also use register *mirah delima* ‘ruby’ which is classified into a phrase. Moreover, they use registers *TT* (*tukar tambah*) ‘barter’ and *BU* (*butuh uang*) ‘need money’ which are classified into acronyms.

Sociocultural Meaning Analysis of Buying and Selling Carnelian Stone Registers

The analysis of sociocultural meanings of tourism register shows that registers play an important role in cross-cultural awareness between buyers and sellers who employ them for a variety of purposes concerned with the intersection of language, culture and society. The following is an example of dialog between a seller (S) and a buyer (B) who comes from Jakarta and speaks little Javanese.

S: *Ngersake nopo, Den?* ‘What do you want, Sir?’

B: *Bagaimana Pak? Bisa diulang?* ‘What? Repeat, please.’

S: *Maaf asalnya dari mana, Mas?* ‘Sorry ... Where are you from, Sir?’

B: *Jakarta, Pak.* ‘Jakarta, Sir.’

S: *Ooo Jakarta ... Mari ... yang situ batu hiasan ... yang sini ada isinya.* ‘Ooo Jakarta ... Please ... that side (collection) of aesthetic stones this side (collection) of something inside the stones.’

B: *Coba lihat. Isinya apa sih, Pak?* ‘Let me see. What is inside the stone, Sir?’

S: (S hands the agate samples to B). *Ini semua bertuah. Yang ini Kalimaya Opal. Asal dari Banten. Untuk pengasih dan tolak bala. Yang ini Kecubung, untuk kelancaran usaha. Dan yang ini Sulaiman, untuk meningkatkan kecerdasan dan percaya diri.* ‘It all contains luck. This is Oval Kalimaya. Originally from Banten. For grace and to prevent crime. This is Amethyst. For smooth running of business. And this is Sulaiman, to improve intelligence and confidence.’

B: *Ooo gitu ya, Pak. Aku lihat-lihat dulu ya, Pak?* ‘Ooo I see, Sir. May I take a look, Sir?’

S: *Monggo, silakan.* ‘Yes, please.’

B: *Lha kalau yang Bapak pakai itu isinya apa?* ‘What is inside (the carnelian stone) you are wearing?’

S: *Ini lain lagi. Mirah delima yang tiap Selasa Kliwon minta caos dhahar minyak zaitun.* ‘This is different. The ruby which should be fed with olive oil every Tuesday *Kliwon* (Javanese Calendar).’

B: *Wah kalau yang pakai magic aku nggak tertarik deh.* ‘I’m not interested for ones using magic.’

In the first underlined expressions, S begins his communication with a question in respectful Javanese or *krama* and uses address form *Den* (abbreviated from *Raden*) ‘Sir’ as a friendly typical of Javanese. B responds directly by asking S for repeating the utterances which implicitly means he does not understand the Javanese expressions. Then in the second underlined expressions, B asks S for explaining the contents of agate samples. The S’s explanation is considered as new cultural knowledge for B. Finally, in the third underlined expressions B does not want to know more about something related to supernatural.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis results, the writers draw conclusions as follows:

1. Forms of buying and selling carnelian stone registers are utterances which have specific meanings expressed by buyers and sellers of carnelian stones.
2. Forms of registers are classified into linguistic units, such as word, phrase and acronym.
3. Registers play an important role in cross-cultural awareness between buyers and sellers for effective communication.

The research findings support previous findings investigated by Purnomo (2016) who analyzed tourism registers based on the aspects of form, function and sociocultural meaning.

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