Representation of Social Control in Language: A Study of Migrant Students' Perceptions in a Multicultural Learning Environment

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how migrant students perceive various forms of social control through language practices and cultural symbols in a multicultural learning environment. The objectives of the study include: (1) analyzing hierarchical control that emerges through kinship greetings; (2) identifying the function of control mechanisms in social categorization language terms; and (3) describing the role of euphemisms as strategies for controlling taboo language. This study is based on an interpretative-constructivist paradigm with a critical-sociolinguistic orientation that views social reality—including social control—as a construction of meaning that is formed, negotiated, and understood through language practices in certain social and cultural contexts. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and open-ended questionnaires for students from outside the province. The results of the study indicate that (1) the diversity of kinship greetings forms social control in language by positioning oneself based on age, status, or other social relationships; (2) the diversity of categorization terms, such as food terms, verbs, and adverbs, forms social and linguistic control in the form of adjustments to vocabulary, meaning, and speech patterns; (3) The diversity of taboo language makes euphemism a strategy to help smooth communication, maintain social harmony, and avoid violating cultural norms.

1. Introduction

Language is both a reflection of culture and a crucial instrument for society in building, maintaining, and controlling social order. In sociolinguistic studies and critical discourse analysis, language is understood not only as a means of communication but also as an ideological medium that shapes and directs social behavior. (Fowler 1991) asserts that language "is not a neutral medium, but a system loaded with ideological significance," so that every language choice is essentially a social act that has the potential to control individual thoughts and actions. Thus, language functions as a mechanism of social control because through certain discourse structures, categories, and lexical choices, society can build and maintain its social order.

From a critical perspective, language is not understood solely as a neutral means of communication, but rather as a social practice where power operates implicitly in everyday interactions (Fairclough 1995). In this study, canonical theories of language and power are not treated as abstract frameworks, but are operationalized analytically to examine how certain linguistic forms function as mechanisms of social control. The analysis focuses on the perceptions of migrant students regarding the use of kinship terms, social classification terms, and euphemisms in multicultural learning environments, and how these linguistic choices are perceived as a means of regulating social relations, negotiating hierarchies, and maintaining cultural norms without direct coercion.

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Culture is a very broad term, therefore there are many definitions of culture. Culture, in relation to language, is not culture in the arts, such as music, literature, and fine arts, but culture in this case is the entire activity of a group of people, both spiritual and material, along with their results. Goodenough in (Wardhaugh 2006) emphasizes that a society's culture consists of anything that must be known or believed in order to be accepted and play a role in a particular community. In a multicultural learning environment, for example in communication between students, cultural practices are reflected in the use of kinship terms (greetings); the use of social classification terms that are interpreted by students from other countries as markers of closeness, social distance, and power relations; and the use of taboo language that results in euphemistic strategies by speakers as a refinement of the meaning of language.

In the context of Javanese culture, including the city of Kediri, language is closely tied to the values of harmony, etiquette, and highly respected social hierarchy. Linguistic phenomena that reflect the language-culture relationship can be found in various aspects. For example, the kinship system is reflected in greetings such as "paklik", "bulik", "mbak-yu", or "dik", which not only describe family relationships but also regulate social relations. (Duranti 1997) states that the greeting system is a cultural way of regulating closeness, status, and social roles through language. Cultural taxonomy also plays a role in grouping concepts socially, for example, the division of types of activities or foods that contain certain normative values in society.

The phenomenon of the relationship between language and culture is also reflected in the use of taboos and euphemisms which are characteristic of communication to maintain politeness; criticism or rejection is conveyed gently in order to avoid social conflict. (Wardhaugh 2006) states that taboo is a prohibition or avoidance of behavior in a society that is believed to be harmful to its members in that it will cause them anxiety, nervousness, or embarrassment. Meanwhile, euphemism is a softening of words, done when there are certain things that cannot be said or certain objects that can be mentioned only in certain circumstances and only by certain people, or through deliberately long words. Things that are the subject of Taboo can vary, including: sex; death; excretion; bodily functions; matters concerning religion and politics. The purpose of violating language taboos includes (1) to draw attention to oneself, or (2) to show contempt, (3) to be aggressive or provocative, (4) to mock authority, and (5) as a seduction, for example, 'talking dirty.' There are penalties for violating language taboos, although they usually do not involve the death penalty.

These language-cultural phenomena are essentially forms of social control that influence how individuals act and interact. From a critical discourse perspective, (Fairclough 1995)states that language shapes social reality through practices of representation and power relations. This means that linguistic norms in Javanese society not only reflect culture but also direct social behavior through symbolic control mechanisms. Modern life has significantly changed the language and culture of a community. Moreover, language use within a community has shifted. The rise of slang, along with the decline in the use of regional languages, has given rise to new cultures, such as the variety of greetings used by certain groups or individuals. These are just a few examples of the relationship between language and culture. There are many other things that can be explained by providing examples or phenomena related to the relationship between language and culture.

In this study, social control that emerges in linguistic practices, such as the use of kinship terms (greetings), social categorization, and euphemisms, implicitly influence the shaping, limiting, and normalizing of social relations in the perceptions of migrant students in a multicultural learning environment. *First*, the use of greetings reflects power relations, social distance, and norms of politeness. The choice of certain greetings can direct individuals to position themselves according to their social position. *Second*, the diversity of terms (e.g., in food names, verb choices, and adverbs) frames social identities and has the potential to control how individuals are perceived and treated in social environments. *Third*, in social control, euphemisms can reduce resistance, maintain social harmony, and indirectly direct the acceptance of certain values or practices.

Internship students who come from outside the province, especially those with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, find themselves in a position of cultural adaptation that demands an understanding of these linguistic and cultural phenomena. Differences in the meaning of kinship greetings, social classification terms, and the use of euphemisms influence their perceptions of forms of social control in Kediri City. As (Hymes 1974) emphasized, successful intercultural communication depends on the ability to understand the social rules inherent in language practices. When internship

students fail to grasp the symbolic meaning or rules of communication, misunderstandings can arise. Conversely, if they are able to adapt, social interactions will be more harmonious.

Research on language and control has been conducted by (Sultan. 2019) entitled "Teacher's Control on Students: Representation of Antisocial Communication in an Indonesian Language Learning Context". The article examines teacher control over classroom interactions as a form of antisocial communication in Indonesian language learning. Through critical discourse analysis, it was found that teacher control is manifested in several actions, namely interrupting students, forcing clarity, controlling topics, formulating answers, limiting contributions, asking closed questions, and ignoring student contributions. This antisocial communication has a negative impact on the learning climate and psychological aspects of students. There is a difference in the scope of the previous research study with this research where the study identified institutional control (teachers) in a micro context, while in this study social control is manifested through language in a macro context, namely the cultural and social environment in Kediri City and emphasizes the perceptions of certain demographic groups, in this context students from other countries at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri.

Further research related to the relevance of language and culture was conducted by (Purba 2023) entitled "Native-Centeredness In The English Language Teaching Materials: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis On Indonesian ELT Textbooks' Cover". This study examines the multimodal critical discourse analysis of the covers of three English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks in Indonesia to reveal the representation of the English as an International Language (EIL) paradigm. In this study, it is concluded that the orientation of English teaching in Indonesia is still centered on 'native-centeredness' or native speakers. This shows that teaching practices still ignore students' readiness in cross-cultural communication. Based on this description, it shows a difference in the research to be conducted, where the previous research focused on linguistic/curricular dominance manifested in teaching materials (textbooks) in the school/formal environment, while the research to be conducted focuses on socio-cultural dominance perceived by individuals (migrant students) in the community environment (informal).

Based on the above description, research on the representation of social control in language through the study of the perceptions of migrant students in a multicultural learning environment is important. This study not only highlights how language becomes an instrument of power (Fowler) and a tool for shaping social reality (Fairclough), but also how migrants negotiate cultural meanings in their adaptation process. The results of this study are expected to enrich the literature on sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, and provide a practical understanding of cross-cultural communication in urban Indonesian environments. This study aims to identify the perceptions of migrant students of the Indonesian Language Education Study Program at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri regarding the representation of social control manifested through the symptoms of the relationship between language and culture. The specific objectives of this study are (1) to analyze the hierarchical control that emerges through kinship greetings; (2) to identify the function of control mechanisms in terms of social categorization language; and (3) to describe the role of euphemism as a strategy for controlling taboo language.

2. Methods

This study adopted a qualitative approach with descriptive methods to examine how social control is represented through language use based on the perceptions of migrant students in the cultural environment of Kediri City. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore this phenomenon in depth, exploring the meanings and understandings contained within the cultural and social context. Researchers explore the students' subjective meanings, interpretations, and experiences of the linguistic practices they encounter in everyday interactions. Descriptive methods are used to present the findings in detail and systematically, thus providing a comprehensive picture of the forms of social control manifested in language in the socio-cultural environment of Kediri City.

This study uses qualitative research with thematic analysis to examine patterns of social control in language, based on a critical discourse analysis perspective. Thematic analysis was chosen with the aim of systematically and flexibly identifying and interpreting recurring meaning patterns in the data (Braun, V., & Clarke 2006). The research data consist of speech, linguistic experiences, and student perceptions. Data sources include (1) 7 students from the Indonesian Language Education Study

Program at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri who have lived in Kediri City for at least six months, with details of 2 of them coming from South Sumatra, while the other 6 are from Banten, Jambi, West Jakarta, Riau, and Central Kalimantan, and (2) cultural documents and local language texts. Informants were selected using purposive sampling (Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim 2016)

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and documentation, in accordance with the principles of naturalistic qualitative data collection (Kvale, S., & Brinkmann 2015). This study also used an open-ended questionnaire to obtain broader and more natural answers from informants. Through this questionnaire, students from out-of-town students conveyed their language experiences, interpretations of meanings related to symbols of language and culture, and forms of social control they experienced without any limitations on answer choices. Interviews were conducted by asking questions to research informants both online and in person, while documentation was conducted by searching for research-related matters in the form of notes related to the language used and culture in the informants' home regions.

Data analysis was carried out using a model (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña 2014) which includes: (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, and (3) drawing conclusions. Data validity was strengthened by triangulation of techniques and sources (Patton 2015). Data were analyzed using a qualitative coding process, with quotes from interviews and observations systematically categorized into themes to show how interpretations are derived in practice. The coding rules were as follows: A indicates perceptions of social control over kinship greetings, B indicates perceptions of social categorization terms, C indicates perceptions of euphemism strategies, while numbers 1–7 indicate students from outside the province.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Migrant Students' Perceptions of the Hierarchical Control of Kinship Addresses

Each region has its own unique set of greetings, and this is especially true for migrant students, who use greetings as a crucial part of their communication as they adapt to new socio-cultural environments. Besides serving as a communication tool, the greetings used in interactions with interlocutors can also indicate identity, relational closeness, and the prevailing social hierarchy within a region. The varied use of greetings, such as "Mas," "Mbak," "Kak," "Bang," "Dik," and others, demonstrates that within a language, there are unwritten rules governing how individuals position themselves based on age, status, or other social relationships. The following are the perceptions of migrant students from various regions regarding the control of hierarchical and kinship addresses.

In Fairclough's framework (Fairclough 2001), social control in language works through the process of naturalization, namely when certain language practices are accepted as "natural" or "ordinary" in a particular culture. Through this mechanism, language: (1) regulates social relations in which the use of kinship greetings or certain social terms serves to maintain social distance, hierarchy, and solidarity in a particular culture; (2) reproduces cultural norms, namely language becomes a medium for transmitting cultural values, including rules of politeness, taboos, and social appropriateness; (3) normalizes social inequality in which social categorization terms or euphemisms often disguise power relations so that inequality appears natural and unproblematic.

Table 1. Perceptions of Migrant Students on Hierarchical Control of Kinship Greetings

Data	Theme Findings	Greeting Words/Phrases that Appear	Quotes Student Perceptions	Perception of Control (Meaning of Hierarchy/Power)
A1	Regional Differences in Greetings and Awkwardness	*"First Name," "Dik," "Neng"*	"In my hometown (Banten), the custom of addressing juniors or younger people tends to be by their first names or by common greetings like 'Dik' or 'Neng.' This makes me feel awkward."	Differences in greeting patterns indicate the existence of cultural hierarchical rules. To indicate age/status, communities use certain greetings. Students from other regions feel the need to adapt to avoid being perceived as violating the hierarchical norms and power relations implied in their choice of

				greetings.
A2	Differences in Addresses for Older Men Across Regions	*"Mas", "Kang", "Bang"*	"When I hear an older man addressed here, it's actually 'mas.' Because in my area (Jambi), the term 'mas' is rarely used, and 'kang' or 'bang' are more common."	The differences in address indicate different rules of social hierarchy across regions. Addresses serve as markers of respect for age and status. Students feel the need to adapt because the use of certain addressees reflects adherence to local norms regarding who should be respected and how that respect is regulated through language.
A3	Adapting Greetings to the Environment and Language Similarities	*"Mbak"*	"During PBAK (Introduction to Academic and Student Culture), I met a friend from my hometown (Palembang), but she also spoke Javanese, just like me, so she used the word 'mbak' to greet me. Most people in Sumatra also use the word 'mbak'." The greeting "mbak" demonstrates the flexibility of linguistic identity.	The use of this greeting indicates looser social control due to shared origins and language. However, there are still hierarchical markers (age/maturity) so students adhere to these greeting norms even when they are in different regions.

Data A1 represents the perception of a student from Banten. He has lived in the province for 20 years and speaks Javanese and Sundanese in his daily life. He noted differences in greeting norms between his hometown (Banten) and Kediri, where he migrated. In Banten, addressing a junior by name or a greeting such as "Dik" or "Neng" is considered normal and neutral. However, when he entered a new cultural environment, Kediri had a different greeting pattern, which created an awkward feeling. He realized that addressing people in his new place had its own rules that must be followed. Data A1 shows that the differences in greetings in Kediri and Banten are not merely semantic but also function as a mechanism of social control. The awkwardness experienced by students from Banten when they arrive in Kediri reflects the normative pressure to conform to local greeting rules. The awareness that the way people are addressed "must be obeyed" indicates that language norms in the new environment operate as a social regulatory tool, directing newcomers' speech behavior to conform to local cultural hierarchies and values.

The case of AI, who moved from his native Banten to a new environment (Kediri) as a student from abroad, illustrates that kinship greetings are not just a matter of language, but also social, regional identity, and politeness. This is in line with research conducted by (Supardo 2007) who examined how Javanese aristocratic families use greeting systems to emphasize social structure, status, and kinship relationships within the family. Greetings such as Rama, Ibu, Mas, Mbak, and Adik not only mark biological relationships but also reflect the etiquette, hierarchy, and values of politeness typical of aristocratic culture. In this article, a form of social control can be drawn, namely how greetings are used to regulate how family members interact, giving respect to elders or those of higher status. In relation to social control, greetings function as a cultural mechanism that aims to regulate, limit, and enforce behavior that is considered appropriate in Javanese society.

Data A2 represents the perceptions of a student from Jambi. The native language used in daily life while in Jambi is Banjar. There are cultural variations in the use of greetings for older men across Indonesia. In his hometown (Jambi), the greetings "Kang" or "Bang" are more commonly used to address older men. In contrast, in the city of his migration (Kediri), the greeting "Mas" is widely used. In this context, the greeting "Mas" in Java emphasizes linguistic etiquette, so the choice of address is bound by rules of politeness. In Jambi, however, the variation of "Bang" is more flexible and less hierarchical than Javanese norms. In the context of social control, there is "positive social pressure" for migrants to adapt to social acceptance. A2's awareness of replacing "Bang"/"Kang" with "Mas" demonstrates the internalization of cultural norms in Kediri.

In this context, the choice of the address "Mas" does not simply reflect semantic differences, but functions as a social control mechanism that regulates linguistic behavior through collective politeness expectations. Implicit social pressures encourage A2 students to adjust their choice of address to avoid negative judgment and gain social acceptance. The shift from "Bang/Kang" to "Mas" demonstrates the internalization of local cultural norms, where language operates as a means of social regulation in everyday interactions. This aligns with Fairclough's view (Fairclough 2001), that language is not merely a system of meaning, but also a social practice for reproducing norms and regulating social behavior. Power and social control often operate in everyday language, often considered normal. A2's choice of the greeting "Mas" when in a new environment is a discursive practice for regulating behavior to conform to local norms of politeness, thus using language as a means of social control, not simply as a marker of meaning.

The phenomenon experienced by A2 relates to the dynamics of students' linguistic adaptation regarding the greeting "Kang" or "Bang" to address older men in their hometown. While in Kediri, A2 encountered Javanese language norms that have a system of language etiquette that regulates diction based on age, social status, and interpersonal relationships. Regarding social control, A2's linguistic adaptation experienced a form of informal control, namely an effort to adjust speaking behavior due to indirect pressure from the environment. Research examining greetings was conducted by (Dewi et al. 2024) in their study entitled "Dynamics of Greeting Word Use in Jambi Malay Society." This article examines the variation, structure, and function of greetings in Jambi Malay society using a sociolinguistic approach. The results found 84 greeting variants spread across seven layers of kinship generations, including kinship terms, nicknames, proper names, second-person pronouns, and names of professions/positions. These findings illustrate the Jambi Malay greeting system is very rich, flexible, and reflects the social structure, kinship relationships, and cultural identity of its people.

Data A3 is a student from South Sumatra Province who has been living in Palembang since his time in his hometown. He has been living in Kediri for four months. Data A3 demonstrates a loose linguistic identity; although both are from Palembang, their choice of address does not automatically follow the norms of their hometown. In this context, it also demonstrates language adaptation through the influence of their traveling environment, where speakers experience linguistic acculturation, which can occur due to intense interaction with Javanese speakers and the comfort of using Javanese on campus. In terms of social control, the demand to follow Javanese address norms, especially in Kediri, is not too strict, as they both live within a solidarity circle among fellow travelers. The use of the address "Mbak" still demonstrates respect based on age and acknowledges the generally accepted norms of politeness on campus.

Based on A3 data, social control over the use of greetings in Kediri, particularly within the UIN Kediri campus, is situational and hierarchical, not strictly enforced when interactions take place within the framework of solidarity among migrants. Nevertheless, the use of the greeting "Mbak" continues to function as a social regulatory mechanism that signals respect based on age and adherence to common norms of politeness expected in academic settings, so that language continues to play a role in guiding interactional behavior without explicit coercion. In the theory of language accommodation by (Giles, H., & Ogay, n.d.) it is stated that speakers adjust their language to achieve social acceptance. Accommodation is not always complete; speakers can choose a form of compromise that is deemed safest in the social context. A3's choice of "Mbak" is a form of partial accommodation that adequately meets politeness expectations without having to fully adopt the Javanese hierarchical system.

The linguistic identity flexibility of migrant students from South Sumatra is reflected in Data A3. There is a phenomenon of linguistic acculturation where students adapt their use of greetings in their hometown to provide comfort in their new social environment, particularly on campus. Intense interactions with Javanese speakers, particularly in Kediri, have led to the emergence of linguistic adaptation. Regarding social control, A3 has communicated with fellow migrants from the same region of origin, indicating that the pressure to follow this norm is not so strong, giving rise to flexibility in language use. Research on the phenomenon of linguistic acculturation has been conducted by (Ali 2020) who discussed the experiences of Spanish and Catalan language acculturation and investment in Catalan among 34 first- and second-generation Muslim immigrant women in Catalonia. The results showed that various sociocultural factors influenced the informants' relationships with their linguistic identities. The study also stated that acculturation is transgenerational, where their linguistic experiences and investments are influenced by their gender and religious identities.

3.2 Migrant Students' Perceptions of Language Terms for Social Classification and Interpreting Their Function as Control

In student communication interactions, language variations not only reflect differences in vocabulary between regions but also reflect the social identities inherent in their speakers. When moving from their home region to a new environment, migrant students are confronted with local language varieties that contain distinct categories of meaning, vocabulary usage, and forms of address. One example is food terms that indicate membership in a particular group. In addition to serving as markers of social identity, language variations also function as a form of social control, regulating speaker behavior in the new community. They must adapt their vocabulary, meaning, and speech patterns to conform to the linguistic norms of the new environment. When migrants encounter new vocabulary considered correct/common in the area, they are indirectly compelled to follow these rules. This demonstrates the role of language as a regulatory mechanism that shapes how individuals understand meaning, convey messages, and position themselves in a new environment. The following table illustrates the perception analysis of language terms as markers of social classification and their function as control.

Table 2. Language Terms as Markers of Social Classification and Their Function as Control

Data	Terms/Language Variations that Emerge	Data Citations	Social Function (Social Classification)	Control Function (How Language Regulates Behavior/Attitudes)
B2	*"ubi" (region of origin = all types of tubers), "telo" (region of migration = cassava), "nangka" (region of origin = ripe and unripe fruit), "tewel" (region of migration = young jackfruit)*	"First, cassava. In my area (Jambi), both cassava and all types of tubers are called 'ubi,' but here, it turns out the word 'ubi' doesn't apply to cassava; cassava itself is called telo. Second, tewel (young jackfruit), in my area, people rarely call it tewel; whether it's young or ripe, it's still called nangka."	Differences in food terms serve as markers of regional identity, as each community has its own culinary vocabulary. The terms telo and tewel represent local categories understood only by local speakers.	This variation creates cultural control over meaning, as new speakers must adapt to the terms to avoid miscommunication, for example when purchasing food or interacting in everyday life. Local norms determine which vocabulary is considered correct and can correct speakers who don't follow local linguistic categories.
B4	*"mangan", "panganan", "mangan o" (Javanese variations typical of East Java)*	"I already understood Javanese when I spent a year in Lampung. Later in my studies in East Java, I heard the terms "makan" = "mangan", "mangan o". Here in East Java, they add an 'o'. My question is, why does the 'o' have to be there? It's delivered so quickly, and then there has to be an 'o'."	East Javanese dialect variations serve as markers of group identity, distinguishing East Javanese speakers from Javanese speakers from other regions (Central Java, Yogyakarta, Lampung, and Sumatra). The use of the -o suffix indicates a particular socio-linguistic membership.	This variation creates normative control because new speakers are "required" to conform to avoid being perceived as foreign or impolite. The -o suffix becomes an unwritten rule: anyone who wants to be accepted into the local community must follow this speech pattern, thus language functions as a tool for regulating social participation.
B5	*"sampe" (in my hometown = finished), "sampe" (in my hometown = arrived), "mari" (in my hometown = finished), "mari" (in my hometown = recovered from illness)**	There are different terms in my hometown (Riau) and here (Kediri). In my hometown (Riau), when I finish something, I say "sampe," but here, "sampe" means "arrived." Here, I say	Differences in meaning indicate dialectal variations that serve as markers of group identity. Each community has its own system of meanings that distinguishes it from other communities. These	This variation in meaning creates interpretive control, requiring speakers to adapt meanings to the social context to avoid misunderstandings. New speakers are required to modify meanings according to local language norms, so that language guides how

		"mari," while in my hometown, "mari" means "recovered from illness."	terms serve as identifiers of "natives" versus "outsiders/immigrants."	speakers act, understand messages, and position themselves within the community.
B6	*"kada" (Banjar = no), "ora" (Javanese = no), "ikam" (Banjar = you), "awakmu/ sampeyan" (Javanese = you)*	"As someone who lives in Central Kalimantan... I have encountered several Javanese terms that have very different meanings... for example, in Banjarese, people usually use the word 'kada' to express 'no,' but in Javanese, people say 'ora.' Even simple words like 'ikam' (you) are not understood by them, because they are more familiar with 'awakmu' or 'sampeyan.'"	The variety of terms creates social categorizations based on linguistic background. Mixed Banjarese/Javanese speakers are clearly distinct from pure Javanese speakers. This vocabulary serves as a marker of social identity and region of origin.	The differences in terms serve as communication controls: speakers must adjust their word choice to be understood and not be perceived as "foreign." Local vocabulary norms guide language behavior, forcing speakers to adapt to be accepted within the community and avoid misunderstandings.

Data B2 represents the perception of a student from Jambi. His native language used in daily life while in Jambi is Banjar. He has been in the city of his migration (Kediri) for approximately five months. Data B2 shows that there are terms/names for food ingredients that categorize the culinary world among them. In Jambi, the term "ubi" refers to all types of tubers. When they migrated to Java, specifically in Kediri, he found that the term "ubi" was not used to refer to cassava; instead, the term "telo" was used as a local marker. Meanwhile, in Jambi, both young and old jackfruit are still called "nangka," while in Kediri there is the term "tewel" for young jackfruit. If he uses the term "ubi" for cassava or uses the term "nangka" for young or old jackfruit, it can be read as "not from here." On the other hand, this difference serves as social control in daily interactions, where students need to adjust to ensure smooth communication, for example when buying food or talking with local residents to align with the social structure of Kediri residents.

The difference between the food terms "ubi" and "telo" in this context is not only semantic, but also represents a marker of social membership in everyday interaction practices. The use of the terms "telo" for cassava and "tewel" for young jackfruit is a local linguistic convention that marks the cultural affiliation of its speakers. This phenomenon demonstrates the function of language as a mechanism of social control, implicitly indicating that language is a social practice that not only represents reality but also actively constructs and regulates social relations through norms of legitimate use within a particular community (Fairclough 1995) In line with this, Bourdieu states that certain lexical choices have symbolic value, where the use of terms that align with local habitus provides social legitimacy, while deviations from these norms have the potential to give rise to assessments as outsiders (Bourdieu 1991). Therefore, the language phenomenon experienced by B2 shows that social control does not lie in the meaning of the words themselves, but rather in the social pressure that drives B2 to adjust their language practices to fit the social structures and expectations of the Kediri community.

The phenomenon of linguistic acculturation, based on the perceptions of first-year students, is found in the food naming system; there are differences in the naming of "sweet potato" in Jambi and Kediri. The vocabulary variations that occur in this phenomenon indicate the inconsistency of terminology used in local areas. Indirectly, this phenomenon requires adjustments from new speakers (newcomers) for smooth communication. Based on the theory proposed by (Myers-Scotton 2002) it provides information that new speakers often experience changes in vocabulary use. This is done to avoid misunderstandings and maintain social harmony. In this context, adjusting the terminology of the food naming system is one of the students' pragmatic strategies for adapting to the new social environment. This also serves to avoid the stigma of being an "outsider" who is often referred to as "not from here."

Data B4 represents the perception of a student from West Jakarta. He used regional languages in his hometown, namely Indonesian or Betawi. He had previously migrated to Lampung. He has studied extensively in Javanese, but sometimes still experiences confusion when interacting with East Javanese speakers. East Javanese dialects, particularly Kediri, often use the suffix "-o" in imperative sentences/expressions, for example, "mangan o," which means "let's eat." From a social perspective, this serves as a marker of group membership. On the other hand, this variation functions as a normative control mechanism where migrants feel compelled to use the suffix "-o" to avoid being perceived as foreign. Indirectly, society has influenced the linguistic behavior of newcomers through unwritten norms, where anyone seeking acceptance in the community must adapt to the local speech style.

In social practice, the use of the -o suffix, which is typical of East Javanese speakers, particularly in the UIN Kediri environment, not only represents grammatical meaning but also functions as a local linguistic convention that marks the speaker's social membership. When B4 does not use the -o suffix in informal communication, this linguistic choice has the potential to be read by the interlocutor as inconsistent with local communication norms, thus creating social distance. When incoming students do not use this form, their linguistic choice has the potential to be positioned as a deviation from the local discursive order, thus marking social distance between the speaker and the community. In Fairclough's framework , the pressure to conform to normative social control mechanisms shows how discursive norms operate as a form of social regulation that shapes individual language behavior to fit the prevailing social structure (Fairclough 2001).

East Javanese dialect variations emerge in students' perceptions, such as the term "mangan o." This variation is a form of socio-linguistic identity marker that distinguishes native East Javanese speakers from Javanese speakers from other regions. Adapting to the East Javanese dialect speech pattern functions as a normative control mechanism. The suffix -o in the word "mangan" becomes an unwritten rule that those who wish to be accepted within the local community must follow this pattern. In this context, there is the use of Javanese spoken by Javanese speakers, which is conveyed to other speakers in a context of familiarity. Javanese language contains stratification in its use. In a study by (Yana, Mira Dwi, Sudrajat 2025) discussed the stratification of Javanese language use in rural communities in East Java and its implications for learning. The results showed that social status, age, and situational context influence the choice of Javanese speech level (ngoko, madya, krama). The study also discussed the phenomenon of convergence as a speaker's effort to adapt to politeness values. There is also the phenomenon of divergence as an expression of modern identity. In the context of B2, there is a phenomenon of convergence and divergence in language which is a manifestation of social control as a driver of behavior to be accepted in the cultural environment.

Data B5 represents the perceptions of students from Riau. Data B5 shows differences in meaning in everyday vocabulary that cause linguistic surprises for students who are migrants. In Riau, the word "sampe" indicates that an activity has been completed; while in Kediri, "sampe" means to have come/arrived. In Kediri, the word "mari" means finished; while in Riau, it means to recover from an illness. This variation marks a socio-linguistic identity where they are recognized as migrants because they use word meanings that do not conform to local norms. This difference is used as an interpretive control where speakers need to be careful and adapt to local meanings to avoid misunderstandings in everyday conversations.

In everyday interactions, the use of vocabulary that is inconsistent with local conventions has the potential to lead to misinterpretation and disrupt the flow of communication. When B5 uses meaning based on the norms of his native region, this linguistic choice is read by the interlocutor as a deviation from the prevailing interpretative norms and can be characterized as a "newcomer." This condition creates social pressure for B5 to adapt to local meanings in order to maintain fluency and acceptability in the interaction. From Fairclough's perspective, the meaning of utterances is not neutral, but is produced and normalized through discursive practices that regulate the process of understanding utterances in certain social contexts (Fairclough 2001). In line with this, according to (Gumperz 1982), differences in interpretive frameworks can lead to misunderstandings that ultimately become markers of social boundaries within certain groups of speakers. Based on this explanation, social control in the phenomenon experienced by B5 does not lie in the vocabulary itself, but rather in shared expectations about legitimate meanings that implicitly direct speakers to adjust their language practices to align with the speech community in Kediri.

The phenomenon of differences in the meaning of terms between regions is also experienced by migrants from Riau, namely in the use of the terms "sampe" and "mari," which have different meanings in their region of origin and in the area of transit. The use of these terms can reflect who is a "native here" and who is still considered an "outsider" or immigrant. Research conducted by (Koontz-garboden 2025) shows that lexical semantics (the meaning attached to basic word units), such as "big" or "long," can vary between languages. This finding challenges the universal view that all root concepts have the same meaning. For example, the term "gila" in Jakarta can mean "very enthusiastic" or "great"; while in another context it means "insane." This form of semantic variation also occurs in new speakers (migrants) from Riau who are still adapting to a new environment (Kediri). This phenomenon reinforces the view that meaning is not rigid and uniform universally across regions; but can be shaped and vary depending on the structure of the language or language use within a community.

Data B6 represents the perception of a student from Central Kalimantan who has been living in his home province for approximately five years. However, he uses Javanese in his daily life both at home and abroad because the majority of his family is from Java. He found fundamental vocabulary differences when interacting with Javanese speakers. In Banjarese, the term "kada" is used to indicate "no," while in Javanese the word "ora" is used. There is also the second-person pronoun "ikam" in Banjarese that is not understood by Javanese speakers; they are more familiar with "awakmu" or "sampeyan." This demonstrates language as a representation of cultural identity. When vocabulary differs and is not understood by the Javanese community, the social identity of "outsider" or "newcomer" becomes very clear. This also demonstrates the role of language as a communication control, where Banjarese migrants can adapt their vocabulary to local language norms. This process demonstrates how language shapes interactions, social relations, and cultural integration in the diaspora.

The phenomenon experienced by B6 demonstrates social control in the form of communicative pressure that drives B6 to adjust his language choices to be understood and accepted within the Javanese speech community. To maintain ongoing interactions and avoid misunderstandings, students are encouraged to replace the Banjarese vocabulary they typically use in communication with locally legitimized forms. This adaptation process demonstrates the function of language as a communication control mechanism where norms of social understanding and acceptance guide individual language behavior in the context of migration. In Silverstein's view, language forms are not only referentially meaningful but also index social identity, position, and relationships (Silverstein 2003). In B6's phenomenon, Banjarese vocabulary indexes non-Javanese identity and triggers the need for adaptation. The language choices used index "insider" or "outsider" thus giving rise to control through social assessment of these indexes.

Differences in terms based on the perceptions of students from Central Kalimantan, for example the word "kada" in Banjarese and "ora" in Javanese, both have the same meaning, namely "no". There are still many terms that vary, but have the same meaning. This is an indicator of a person's origin and social identity. A study relevant to this study is the research conducted by (Suhardi., Santoso 2011) who identified the similarities and differences between Indonesian, Javanese, and Banjarese to design an Indonesian language learning model for beginners. The results of the study show that the three languages have similarities at the vocabulary level (phonological and morphological aspects), phrase structure (Described-Explained or DM structure), and clause/sentence structure (S-P, S-P-O/PEL, and S-P-K patterns or S-V-O/S-P-O structure). Differences in terms in various regional languages in Indonesia can be used as an effort to strengthen national unity. The diversity of languages is not a divider of the nation but a unifier. This is the importance of social control in the form of socio-linguistic boundaries. New speakers need to adapt their vocabulary to local norms to be accepted in social interactions.

3.3 Euphemistic Language Strategies and Perceptions of Social Control Among Migrant Students

Euphemistic language strategies play a crucial role for migrant students in adjusting to norms of politeness and social control in their new environment. The use of euphemisms helps smooth communication, maintain social harmony, and avoid violating cultural norms. This process also serves as a form of self-control guided by local social rules, so that language functions not only as a means of

communication but also as a mechanism for regulating behavior in social interactions. Table 3 presents an analysis of euphemisms and perceptions of social control among migrant students at UIN Kediri.

Table 3 Analysis of Euphemisms and Perceptions of Social Control of Migrant Students

Data	Themes of Findings	Words/ Phrases that Emerge	Quotes from Student Perceptions	Social Control Perception	Analysis of the Role of Euphemisms as Controls for Taboo Language
D1	Shifting Norms of Politeness & Controlling Taboo Language	"You," "Gue," "Rude Language"	"When communicating in my hometown (Banten), I often use 'lu' and 'gue.' Sometimes I do the same with older people, because 'lu' and 'gue' are very common in my hometown (Banten), but here (Kediri), people consider them rude."	Students recognize that linguistic norms in their new hometowns differ, so the use of "lu-gue" is considered a violation of communication etiquette. There is a process of social control from the new environment through the assessment of local communities (labeling: "rude language").	In the context of Kediri, the use of the greeting "lu-gue" is considered impolite, so students need to replace it with euphemisms or polite forms of address: "sampeyan," "panjenengan," or "anda." Euphemisms here function as a smoothing tool to avoid norm conflicts, social conflict, and maintain harmonious communication. The environment forces speakers to choose more polite forms as a form of self-censorship in cross-cultural interactions.
D2	Shifting Norms of Politeness in Greetings	"koe," "samean," "jenengan"	First, the term "koe," meaning "you," is commonplace and polite in my area for Javanese people. However, here, this term is considered rude and impolite, and it has been replaced with "samean" or "jenengan,"	Students experience subtle normative reprimands from the community when they use a term of address considered derogatory (koe). The community sets new standards of politeness through the term "samean/jenengan." This demonstrates the existence of a	The euphemism of "samean/jenengan" serves to smooth interactions and adapt to the Mataraman Javanese language level. Euphemisms replace forms considered rude, thus preventing face-threatening acts and maintaining social harmony. The speaker then learns

			which are words I rarely hear there.	local socio-cultural control mechanism based on the level of speech (unggah-ungguh).	to exercise self-control in choosing greetings so as not to violate norms.
		Differences in Cultural Meaning and Potential Linguistic Taboos	The social environment imposes restrictions on words that have sensitive or inappropriate connotations according to local culture. Students perceive negative labeling of words that are culturally different, necessitating changes in language habits.	The social environment imposes restrictions on words that have sensitive or inappropriate connotations according to local culture. Students perceive negative labeling of words that are culturally different, necessitating changes in language habits.	"Masamu" in areas where they are living is considered taboo, so it needs to be replaced with euphemisms such as "Do you know?", "Do you know?", or "Have you heard of it?". Euphemisms here function as a tool to avoid sensitive double meanings and maintain local cultural politeness. This process leads speakers to refine their language to maintain social relations.
D4	Interregional slang adjustments	"lo-gue," "considered taboo," "too rude"	The "lo-gue" (Jakarta) slang was dropped because it was considered taboo and too rude in this area (Kediri).	The social environment considers Jakarta slang (lo-gue) to be inconsistent with local politeness norms. Students feel subtle social pressure (informal social control) to abandon this style of language. Local norms force speakers to adjust their register to be accepted within the community.	Euphemisms arise when speakers replace "lo-gue" with a more polite greeting, such as "you," "sampeyan," or "panjenengan," according to the context of proximity and local Javanese culture. This substitution serves to mitigate language considered taboo or rude, thereby preventing communication conflicts and protecting the face of the interlocutor. The environment encourages self-regulation in choosing language that conforms to local cultural politeness.

Data D1 represents the perception of a student from Banten. He noted differences in politeness norms regarding the use of the greetings "you" and "gue." In his hometown (Banten), these greetings are considered normal, common, and not considered rude. However, in his hometown (Kediri), these greetings are considered rude, impolite, and inappropriate, especially when speaking to older people. A form of social control in this situation involves speakers learning to replace the greetings "you" and "gue" with more polite forms in the local Kediri dialect, such as "sampeyan" or "panjenengan."

The linguistic phenomenon experienced by D1 shows that social control does not lie in the lexical meaning of the greeting, but rather the social reaction from the interlocutor in the form of negative assessments and normative expectations that direct D1 to adjust his language choices. The replacement of "lu", "gue" with forms accepted in the social context of the UIN Kediri learning environment to "sampeyan" or "panjenengan" is a form of compliance with local politeness norms and an effort to avoid social sanctions in the form of impolite assumptions. This replacement of greetings is relevant to Bourdieu's view which is called symbolic power, namely the ability of dominant language norms to enforce legitimacy and determine the form of speech that is considered appropriate (Bourdieu 1991).

The perceptions of out-of-town students from Banten in the D1 data show that politeness norms in the use of greetings are strongly influenced by the cultural context and social space in which the language is used. The greeting "lu-gue," which in their hometown is considered a normal, egalitarian form of communication and does not indicate impoliteness, experiences a shift in meaning when used in a new environment such as Kediri. This change in perception indicates the functioning of linguistic social control, namely a societal mechanism to enforce language rules that are considered appropriate. Through the process of adaptation, speakers eventually learn to replace the greeting "lu-gue" with more polite forms such as "sampeyan" or "panjenengan." This finding is in line with previous research, namely research by (Yassi and Rahman 2018) which compared euphemisms in English and Bugis. The results showed that euphemisms in Bugis are more complex in terms of form and function compared to English. In the context of the D1 data as out-of-town students, euphemisms can be used as social control to avoid taboo and frightening things, as well as as a sign of respect.

Data D2 represents the perception of a student from Jambi. He found differences in the level of politeness of greetings in Kediri compared to other parts of Java. The greeting "koe," meaning "you," is considered normal, common, and not problematic in terms of politeness. However, in Kediri (especially on campus), this greeting is interpreted as rude and impolite in social interactions. Forms of socio-cultural control related to the use of this form of address are manifested through normative reprimands from the environment, the instilling of new standards of politeness, and control through language rules, such as how to address elders, how to be respectful, and when to use polite or rude language.

The linguistic phenomenon experienced by D2 gave rise to social control, not in the lexical meaning of the greeting "koe" but rather a social evaluation mechanism that emerged from the interlocutor in the form of reprimands, implicit corrections, and the instillation of standards of politeness that apply within the community. The concept of language ideology states that collective beliefs about language determine the forms of speech that are considered appropriate or inappropriate within a community (Woolard 2020). The politeness ideology formed in the multicultural learning environment at UIN Kediri indirectly regulated when and to whom these forms of greeting were used, so that speakers from outside the province (outside the community) were encouraged to internalize these rules. Therefore, the adjustment of greetings as a form of social control carried out by D2 was not merely a linguistic adaptation, but a form of compliance with the local socio-cultural order.

The shift in politeness norms in the use of the terms "koe," "samean," and "jenengan" based on D2 perceptions indicates that migrant students must adapt to Mataraman Javanese etiquette standards. The term "koe," which is considered common and not rude in their home region, is perceived differently in their new environment because it is considered an inappropriate form of ngoko (ngoko) for older or respected people. Gentle reprimands from the community serve as a form of social control that directs speakers to switch to more polite terms, such as "sampeyan" or "jenengan." This shift functions as a euphemism, a softening of language to avoid appearing impolite, allowing speakers to learn linguistic adjustments to maintain social harmony. A study by (Walker et al. 2021) examined public evaluations of actions influenced by the use of euphemistic (pleasant) and dysphemistic (unpleasant) terms. The

results showed that the public was more receptive to pleasant terms. Strategic speakers can effectively influence public opinion through careful word choice without resorting to factual lies.

In addition to the perceptual data above, D2 also provided language experience related to the word "masamu" used by Kediri speakers. In their hometown, "masamu" is commonly used as a story opening phrase, similar to the phrase "do you know?", which is generally neutral. However, in Kediri, "masamu" is associated with terms with inappropriate or taboo connotations, causing discomfort. Linguistic social control mechanisms in this case can be implemented through social labeling, requiring speakers to be cautious and change their speaking habits, establishing norms of language sensitivity, and cultural corrections toward new speakers.

The linguistic phenomena experienced by D2 in this context demonstrate the existence of linguistic social control in the social process of interpretation and normative evaluation attached to its use. Social reactions in the form of negative labeling, signals of disapproval, or avoidance of interaction serve as regulatory mechanisms that direct speakers to be more careful and try to adjust their speaking habits. This is in line with Cameron's view that society continuously carries out "language maintenance" through efforts to correct, assess, and regulate the way people speak in order to realize certain social norms. The correction of the use of the word "masamu" experienced by D2 is a practice of verbal hygiene, in which the local community regulates linguistic behavior to maintain norms of politeness that are considered ideal (Cameron 2012)

Data from D4 represents the perceptions of a student from West Jakarta. Similar to D1, the greetings "loe" and "gue" in their area are common, neutral, and not considered rude. In fact, the use of "loe" and "gue" conveys familiarity and close friendship. However, in the Kediri region, it is considered rude, impolite, and even taboo for everyday communication. To integrate, students must adapt their register (their choice of language formality), as failure to adapt can lead to social distance, misunderstandings, or an image of impoliteness. Social control in the linguistic phenomena experienced by D4 lies in the language legitimacy mechanisms that apply within the student learning community at UIN Kediri. This aligns with Coupland's view that the choice of language style becomes a social act that is monitored and assessed. Social control operates through pressure for individuals to use language styles that align with local identities and norms (Coupland 2007).

The adaptation of slang across regions in Data D4 shows that the use of the greeting "lo-gue" which is common in Jakarta's urban culture is not always acceptable in the context of local politeness in Kediri. For the local community, this form of address is considered too rude, even close to taboo, thus giving rise to informal social pressure that encourages students who are away from home to adjust their language style. According to (Brown, P., & Levinson 1987) speakers will choose a more polite language strategy to avoid threats to face (face-threatening acts). This social control mechanism works subtly through cultural norms and environmental responses, so that speakers learn to replace greetings considered impolite with more appropriate forms, such as "kamu", "sampeyan", or "panjenengan". This substitution is a form of euphemism, namely a strategy of softening language to avoid potential threats to politeness and maintain harmonious interactions. This process ultimately forms linguistic self-regulation, where speakers consciously choose a register that is acceptable in their new social community.

4. Conclusion

This research shows that the language experiences of migrant students in Kediri City demonstrate the workings of social control, which operate through three main domains: the use of greetings or kinship terms, social categorization terms, and euphemisms. Differences in the use of greetings and kinship terms structure social relations, hierarchies, and expressions of politeness that migrant speakers must adhere to. Meanwhile, variations in social categorization terms—including the naming of food, social categories, and certain titles—function as markers of cultural membership, requiring speakers to adjust their lexical choices to avoid being perceived as deviating from local norms. The use of euphemisms demonstrates how the local community manages sensitivity to meaning and limits certain utterances to maintain social harmony.

Analytically, these findings confirm that social control in language operates implicitly through social evaluation, normative correction, and cultural expectations in these three domains. Linguistic adaptations made by migrant students are not solely the result of differences in linguistic meaning, but rather the result of the internalization of linguistic norms and ideologies that determine what forms of

speech are considered legitimate and appropriate. Language, in this case, functions as a means of social legitimacy that regulates acceptance, social distance, and the speaker's position within the community. This research's contribution lies in concretely mapping how everyday language practices—through greetings, social categorization, and euphemisms—serve as mechanisms of social control in the context of acculturation of migrant students in a multicultural educational environment.

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