

**IMPOLITENESS IN INDONESIAN TELEVISION SERIES:
A Case Study of Verbal Abuse in *Anak Langit* TV Series**

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Abstract

Anak Langit is an Indonesian *sinema elektronik* (*sinetron*) or electronic cinema, a kind of tv series, for teenagers since most of the main characters are teenagers. Young viewers love this tv series as it tells us about the life of a motor gang in a big city which becoming a trend recently in several big cities in Indonesia. Although the main characters show the viewers how to be a good motor gang with positive attitude, we consider the language of this TV series is impolite as the rival of this motor gang often shows verbal abuse in most of their scenes using Bahasa Indonesia dialect Betawi (the language of Betawi people, the people of Betawi Kampong in Jakarta). Those impolite utterances may be used to show the real life, including the colloquial language, of Jakarta/Betawi people which sometimes considered impolite by common people. It may be also done to strengthen the characteristics of the antagonist ones who are impolite and rude. In Pragmatics Study, impoliteness violates the Maxims of Politeness Principles. This violation can be seen as electronic media violence that may influence viewers to imitate the verbal abuse such as using the impolite utterance or doing the violence. In the end, it may leads into violence and less pro-social behaviour.

Key words: impoliteness, verbal abuse, politeness principle, violence

1. Research Background

A two way communication involves speaker and hearer who are changing information to fulfil each other's need. To keep a good social relationship between them, resulting to continuous need's fulfilling, the communication should be done in a polite way by holding the Politeness Principles. One of the ways to be polite in communication is by having politeness awareness. To have it, people should understand the language politeness of a particular language community as different community has its own politeness

Language politeness is social convention created by language community to maintain respectful relationship among the member of the community. Thus, speaker should speak the message clearly, understand who the hearer is, what his/her social status is, and what is he/she talking about to avoid the hearer's misunderstanding or insultment.

Almost all Indonesian *sinema elektronik* (*sinetron*) or electronic cinema, a kind of tv series, in their programs as many Indonesian viewers love to see it. However, some of them had been reported to *Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia* (KPI) or Indonesian Broadcasting Commission as it showed vulgar or violence language or scene. The vulgar language or scene is dominated by adult or teenagers television programs which aired love scenes, while the rude language or violence scene is dominated by adult or teenagers television programs which aired action scenes such as *Anak Langit* TV series.

Anak Langit is an action -and of course romance- TV series aired by *Surya Citra Televisi* (SCTV) TV station. It shows the life of two racing motorcycle gang that rivals for having certain dominating territory, winning motorcycle race, and -of course- getting the heart of the same girl. As the setting is in Jakarta, where most of

teenagers and adults speak Bahasa Indonesia with Betawi dialect or even Bahasa Betawi itself, most of the characters of this TV series are using those two languages. For Jakarta/Betawi people, the two languages are probably not considered impolite as they are accustomed to use it in their daily conversation. However, for many people in all over Indonesia who can watch this TV series, it can be considered impolite or even sarcastic.

The impolite utterances are mostly used when the two gang are facing each other in an argument, a race or a fight. In fact, some words can be categorized as impolite words consider to Pragmatics Politeness Principle that should not be aired based on KPI regulation as it belongs to banned words. In this research, we analyse *Anak Langit* TV series to describe how the language of the characters violates Pragmatics Politeness Principle argued by Leech (1983).

Similar research is done by Rosada (2016) in *Analysis Kesantunan Berbahasa dalam Film 'Ayat-Ayat Cinta' Karya Hanung Bramantyo sebagai Suatu Kajian Pragmatik* or "Language Politeness Analysis on the Movie 'Love Verses' by Hanung Bramantyo as Pragmatics Study" by using Leech (1983) Politeness Principle with six maxims. It shows the violation of Tact, Approbation, Agreement, Modesty, Sympathy, and Generosity Maxims in the dialogues of the movie's characters.

Another research related to this topic is Nurjamily (2015) study entitled *Kesantunan Berbahasa Indonesia dalam Lingkungan Keluarga (Kajian Sosiopragmatik)* or "Indonesian Politeness in Family Environment (Sociolinguistics Study)". It reveals the use of Brown and Levinson (1987) Negative Politeness, Leech (1983) Politeness Principle and Grice (1975) Cooperative Principles in the use of Indonesian Language in family environment.

2. Research Method and Technique

This research applies a descriptive and a qualitative method in analysing *Anak Langit* TV series, particularly Episode 1-12, containing impolite utterances, to describe the violation of Leech (1983) Politeness Principles on the characters' utterances. The population of the data are the characters' utterances, while the sample of the data were obtained by using Purposive Sampling Technique to choose the utterances containing impolite utterances. The data were collected by using *Teknik Simak Bebas Libat Cakap* or Involved Conversation Observation Technique and *Teknik Catat* or Writing Technique from Sudaryanto (1993) by observing the video of the TV series - downloaded from vidio.com as secondary data source- and writing the dialogues containing impolite utterances.

3. Research Theory

3.1. Impoliteness

Impoliteness occurs when a speaker does not have politeness awareness toward a hearer. This Politeness Principle violation creates negative reactions from the hearer toward the speaker. The hearer can be sad, disappointed, insulted or even mad. Impoliteness Politeness can also happen when a speaker is not able or even fails to see (understand) the situation, condition or the context of the conversation such as who the hearer is, what his/her social status is, and what the topic of the conversation is that also leads to the negative reactions of the hearer as it is mentioned before. It can be said that impoliteness is a form of insultment in a conversation.

3.2. Verbal Abuse

With the overwhelming social media that allow everyone in the whole world to say anything to anyone under minor supervision of information technique law maker, we can see many verbal abuse

cases from various age-level, particularly teenagers and adult. The most common verbal abuse is happening when someone wants to say bad-words to someone he/she does not like. In addition to satisfy their desire of bullying someone they hate, they think that by doing it they can take their 'enemy' down -psychologically or even physically- by their bad wordings. When the bullies are able to make their victim down, they feel like they are the winner of the 'game' and become the strongest among the community so that they will be respected or feared by others.

Verbal Abuse is aimed at making someone hurt, afraid, or suffer from various kinds of loss. It is not only in the form of physical abuse but also abusive or vulgar language or even throwing threat or bluff. Durenfeld (TT: 1) said that "verbal abuse takes several forms including threats, foul or demeaning language, hostile tone or volume, intensity or delivery whether loud or quiet and sarcasm". It can be said that verbal abuse has negative impact for the victim on -at least- two aspects, emotional and psychological. They can lose their confidence, happiness, life spirit, or life principle and feeling stressed or depressed. In fact, there are verbal abuse victims who finally get insane or even commit suicide.

4. Discussion of Impoliteness Structure in "Anak Langit"

4.1. Positive Impoliteness

Episode 1-2

Key : *Rimba! Tolong, loe jangan ganggu bokap kita lagi. Tadi aja loe nyelakain bokap kita sampai masuk rumah sakit. Gue harap, loe dan temen-temen loe bisa lebih bijak di jalanan.*

(Rimba! Please, (you) do not disturb our dad again. You were disturbing our

dad and made him hospitalized. I hope, you and your gang can be wiser (driving motorcycle) on street.)

Rimba : *Di jalanan ga ada yang namanya bijak! Rusuh, kebut-kebutan, itu kode yang ada di jalanan.*

(There is no wisdom on street! Chaos, fast race, that is the street 'code'.)

One of Antrax Gang Member :

Eh,

katro (mengarah pada Al, Andra, dan Key)! Lu tuh anak kampung, masih belagu aja ya! Suruh aja bokap lu biar lebih bijak, biar tahu caranya di jalanan!

(Hey *katro* (addressing Al, Andra, and Key)! You are 'kampong kids', do not be cocky! Tell your dad to be wise on street, so he understands how to behave on street!)

Al : *Udah gue duga, nih, olahraga!*

(I had already guessed it, 'time to exercise'!)

The context of this conversation is Babe tells Al, Andra and Key about the reason why he got injured in an accident. It was caused by a motorcycle gang called Antrax lead by Rimba who is disturbing him on street. Al, Andra and Key feel insulted so that Andra wants to find Antrax to take revenge. Al and Key follow him to stop him. When Andra meets Antrax, and he has an argument first with Rimba and one of Antrax Gang Members before he get a fight with them on street. Al and Key start to help their brother.

Positive Impoliteness is indicated by what one of Antrax Gang Members said as the word *katro* and *anak kampung* means kid from rural or isolated area (village)

who does not know anything about city life. The words 'katro' and 'anak kampung' belong to Positive Impoliteness called 'snubs the others' that is making other feels insulted.

4.2. Positive Impoliteness

Episode 12

Andra : *Makasih lo buat sambutannya nih. Gue cuma bingung sama loe semua ya. Sebegitu kangennya sama gua sampai harus nyambut gua kayak gini ya? Ha?*

(Thanks for welcoming. I just get confused of you all. How you miss me a lot that make you welcome me like this.)

One of Antrax Gang Members :

Ban

get!

(Very much)

Andra : *Gue bingung sebenarnya yang ayam siapa? Gua atau lu semua ha? Ayam! (I was confused. Who is chicken? Me, or all of you? Chicken!)*

Rimba : *Heh, loe kira gue peduli?! Ha?! Antrax, bantai!*

(Like I care (about you)?! Ha?! Antrax, kill!)

The context of this conversation is Andra is trapped in Antrax trap. As food delivery service, he delivers chicken to *Penjaga* Street Number 15 but there is nobody there. Andra has a feeling that he is being trapped. The next minute, Antrax Gang members are coming. Andra has an argument first with them before he finally got an imbalance fight with the whole Antrax Gang members that make him lose.

Positive Impoliteness is indicated by what Rimba said as it violates Sympathy Maxim because he has no sympathy toward Andra who is trapped alone and about to fight with his gang members. The word 'bantai' belongs to Positive Impoliteness called 'abusive language' that is saying a rude word following by brutal action.

4.3. Negative Impoliteness

Episode 6-9

Rimba : *Anak pungut kaya dia aja dibela sampai segini ya?*

(An adopted kid like him is defended like this?)

Mama Rimba : *Maksud kamu? Anak pungut gimana, Nak?*

(What do you mean? What kind of adoption kid?)

Rimba : *Al kan anak pungut, Ma. Ditemuin di tepi jalan makanya nama di AL, Anak Langit.*

(Al is and adopted kid, Mom. He is founded on street, that is why, he is named AL, Anak Langit (son of the sky))

The context of this conversation is Al sitting on an orphanage terrace, looking at his orphanage younger brothers and sisters playing together in the orphanage yard. Suddenly, something pops in Rimba's mind. Rimba mocks Al by calling him 'adopted child' and 'Anak Langit' or 'son of the sky' -as he is nobody's child- in front of Rimba's mother. Al feels hurt and wants to tell Babe about it, but he is afraid

that Babe will get more burdens because of it.

Negative Impoliteness is indicated by what Rimba said as the words '*anak pungut*' and '*Anak Langit*' belongs to Negative Impoliteness called 'scorn' that is underestimating others or insulting others by making them feel inferior.

4.4. Negative Impoliteness

Episode 10-11

Pak Robert : *Ehem. Ini dia motornya Andra. Gua harus nglakuin sesuatu nih. Biar dia ngelakuin kesalahan yang fatal, musti dipecat. Walaupun loe dibelain sama anaknya owner, jangan panggil gue Robert Chicago kalau gua nggak bisa nendang loe dari sini. Lagian pake ngedeketin Tary, kelar idup loe. Hmm... (bersenandung sambil melihat ke sekitar agar tidak ada orang yang mencurigainya)*
(This is Andra's motorcycle. I must do something to make him do something fatal so that he will get fired. Although you are defended by the owner's daughter, do not call me Robert Chicago if I cannot kick you out of here. You get close to Tary, you are done.)

The context of this conversation is Pak Robert gets jealous when Andra gets close to Tary, the owner's daughter. When he finds Andra's motorcycle, he has a plan to do something bad to it by making a small incision on its fuel cable so that he

will get into trouble and finally get fired from his job. Thus, Pak Robert can get close to Tary again.

Negative Impoliteness is indicated by what Pak Robert said as the sentence '*jangan panggil gue Robert Chicago kalau gua nggak bisa nendang loe dari sini*' belongs to Negative Impoliteness called 'metaphorically' that is highly praising oneself as if he is the best of all best.

4.5. Bald on Record Impoliteness

Episode 10-11

Rimba : *Ibes, gimana? Lu udah tahu tempatnya si Andra?*

(Ibes, have you already know Andra's place?)

Ibes : *Tenang dulu, gue udah dapet nomor telepon tempat kerjanya*
(Calm down, I got his office number.)

Rimba : *Lu yang paling cerdas di sini sekalian lu lihat nih, Riko. Dia juga digebukin sama anak Rainbow. Emang mereka bener-bener cari masalah sama kita. Kita hajar dulu si Andra, baru kita habisin satu-satu.*

(You are the smartest here, look at Riko. He is also got beaten by Rainbow Gang. They are really get into trouble with us. We beat Andra first, then we 'finish' (the rest of Rainbow Gang) one by one.)

One of Antrax Gang member :
Mendingan kita jebak aja si Andra. Kita suruh kirim ayam ke mana kek. Nah, baru di sana kita hajar dia yo. Kan Ibes udah punya nomernya. Gimana yo?

(How if we trap Andra?
We make him send
chicken to some place.
Then, we beat him there.
Ibes has already got the
number (of Andra's
office), right? How
about that?)

The context of this conversation is Ibes, one of Antrax Gang member, get back to Antrax's Place. Antrax wants to take revenge to Andra because he made Rimba's motorcycle broken. Moreover, Riko, another Antrax Gang member, had been beaten Rainbow Gang where Andra belong. They make a plan to trap Andra, beat him, and defeat the rest of Rainbow Gang member.

Bald on Record Impoliteness is indicated by what one of Antrax Gang member said as the sentence '*Mendingan kita jebak aja si Andra. Kita suruh kirim ayam ke mana kek. Nah, baru di sana kita hajar dia yo*' violates Agreement Maxim because he disagrees with what Rimba said '*Kita hajar dulu si Andra, baru kita habisin satu-satu*' as the leader of Antrax.

4.6. Withhold Politeness

Episode 3

Budhe : *Vik, kamu nih gimana si?!
Kamu polos atau
gimana?!*
(Vik, are you innocent or
what?!)

Vika : *Jadi, Vika nemuin dia
pingsan di pinggir jalan
saat nunggu bis, tapi
masih ada aja yang mau
nyopet dia, Budhe, kan
kasihan. Ya udah Vika
bawa aja mumpung ada
bajaj, Budhe.*
(So, Vika finds him
fainted on street while
waiting for the bus, but
someone still wants to
steal something from him.

Vika feels pity on him,
Budhe. So Vika takes him
home by *bajaj*, Budhe.)

Budhe : *Aduh, Vika! Kamu, tuh,
gimana! Ini tuh Jakarta,
kamu ga bisa bawa
sembarangan orang ke
rumah. Pokoknya ngga
mau tahu, kamu harus
bawa anak itu keluar dari
rumah ini!*

(Oh, Vika, what is the
matter with you. This is
Jakarta, you cannot take
anybody you do not know
home. I do not want to
know, you must take this
kid out of here!)

The context of this conversation is Vika helps Rimba who is fainted on street after he had an accident. She takes him to his aunty's home, but her aunty gets mad at her by saying that she is too innocent by helping and even taking unknown people home.

Withold Politeness is indicated by Budhe's disappointment and disagreement of what Vika did, helping and even taking unknown people in a bad condition on street to her house. Budhe considers Jakarta as a big city full of crimes so she is afraid that Vika's innocent act will get her into trouble. What Budhe said '*kamu ga bisa bawa sembarangan orang ke rumah*' indicates Withold Politeness as it means we cannot take someone home unless we know that person well. It means, Budhe does not like or want Vika doing it.

5. Conclusion

The negative image of Indonesian motorcycle gang as group or teenagers who rides motorcycle recklessly by neglecting their and others street users safety is getting worst by the existence of motorcycle gangs that create terror like doing unsafe race on public street, gambling, stealing someone's property, fighting with and killing another gang

members or even common people they considered as their enemy.

Anak Langit tv series on SCTV wants to give positive image of motorcycle gang like what Rainbow Motorcycle Gang did as there are some motorcycle gangs in Indonesia who still do positive activities like holding touring and social events. Unfortunately, their rival Antrax Motorcycle Gang shows the negative image to the viewers by uttering bad words and doing bad things like what bad motorcycle gangs did. The two gangs often have arguments and fight with impolite utterance and violence action creating verbal abuse on tv, seen by many viewers in Indonesia from children to adult. It means this tv program contains violation of Politeness Principle that interrupt the good social relationship between speaker and hearer or among community member.

This violation, along with the violence action, can be considered as electronic media violence that may influence viewers to commit aggressive / violent behaviour such as imitating the impoliteness or even doing the violence. If it is continued, it may leads into violent behaviour like saying bad words or do bad things to other and less pro-social behaviour like making others feels bad or less worthed.

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