

French Speech Level in Conversation with Friends

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Abstract. This study aims to describe the form of French speech levels in conversations with friends. This study is a qualitative descriptive study. The research data is in the form of conversation texts with friends containing speech levels. The source of research data is conversations with friends. Data collection was carried out using the listening and note-taking method. The research instrument in this study was the researcher himself with the help of data cards. The validity of the data was obtained by meeting the credibility criteria, which were carried out by matching with a dictionary, repeated observations and discussions with colleagues. Data were analyzed using the distribution method for the classification stage, and the pragmatic matching method for the interpretation stage. The results of the study showed that the form of lingual units that indicate speech levels in conversations with friends includes the lexico-syntactic level. At the lexicon level there are second-person pronouns *vous* and *tu*, argot lexicon in the form of verbs, adjectives, adverbs; Verlan lexicon consisting of verbs, adjectives, nouns and gross nominal lexicons.

Keywords: Speech level, conversation with friends, French.

1 Introduction

Speech level is a variation of language whose differences are determined by differences in polite attitudes within the speaker towards the interlocutor or speech partner (Pudjosudarmo, 1979: 3). Those with a lower class or social status use a higher level of language or 'krama' when interacting verbally with parties with a higher social status, whereas those with a higher social status use a lower level of language or 'ngoko'. The neatness and completeness of the vocabulary forms possessed by the Javanese language system allows each group member to select and use them according to their function and situation.

In European languages that have a system of second person pronouns *Tu* 'you' and *Vous* 'you', such as French, Italian and German (hereinafter abbreviated as 'T-V'), the choice of these pronouns can show respect and familiarity. and awareness of customs. The level of speech that is motivated by the level of social status also occurs in the French language community. The practice of using T-V second person pronouns non-reciprocally in the Middle Ages until the French Revolution, is a reflection of the influence of social status on language use. The use of

this pronoun still continues today, only there has been a shift in meaning. Apart from being reflected in the choice of pronouns, variants based on social status can also be seen in variations in word choice and sentence structure. In line with the concept of speech level, in French there is the concept of *niveau de langue* which has more or less the same understanding as the concept of speech level. Gerard Tamine (1998: 120-121) states that the concept of *niveau de langue* is selective use of language which implies the existence of a hierarchy of language use, which is related to social and aesthetic norms. There are at least 3 levels in French, namely *une langue soutenu*, *une langue courante* and *des parler patois*. *Une langue soutenu* is a form used in intellectual circles, *une langue courante* is a form which in its use tends to be spontaneous, not really following strict grammatical rules, while *parler patois* is a form of peripheral social dialect, which is usually used by certain communities and in certain sociocultural contexts. , for example farmers who talk about rural life (Larousse, 1973: 337).

2 Research Objective

In this research, a qualitative descriptive method was used. Speech

Conversations with friends are the object of this research. Data collection uses listening and note-taking techniques.

3 Result and Discussion

1. Speech Level at the Lexicon Level

a. Pronoun Vous (V)

The choice of T-V pronouns in speech reflects the speaker's view of the person he is saying which can reveal a sense of solidarity, power, distance, respect, closeness or something else. The pronoun *Vous* 'you' is used to address plural addressees or singular addressees. The use of *V* to greet a single interlocutor, which is often referred to as a form of respect, informs a lot about the speaker's view of his relationship with the interlocutor. In general, the use of the pronoun *V* in a balanced way is used to address someone you don't know or are unfamiliar with. In a social context, when individuals specifically mark differences between the social status of the speaker and the interlocutor, speakers who are taller, older or more powerful will tend to use *T* to the interlocutor who is being spoken to is of lower status, younger and less powerful, and then he will receive *V* from the interlocutor. The use of the pronoun *V* to greet an unknown interlocutor can be seen in the following speech situation.

Example of a French Conversation Between Two Friends

The following is an example of a simple conversation in French between two friends.

Dinda : Bonjour! (Good morning/afternoon/evening.)

Dodi : Bonjour! (Good morning/afternoon/evening.)

Dinda : Comment allez-vous? (How are you?)

Dodi : Je vais bien merci, et vous? (My news is good, while you?)

Dinda: Je vais bien also. (My news is also good.)

Dodi : Vous vous appelez comment?/comment vous appelez-vous? (what's your name?)

Dinda: Je m'appelle Dinda. Et vous? (My name is Dinda. Meanwhile you?)

Dodi : Je m'appelle Dodi. (My name is Dodi.)

Dinda : Quel est votre profession? (What work do you do?)

Dodi : Je suis étudiant. Et vous? (I'm a student, you?)

Dinda : Je suis étudiante also. (I'm also a college student.)

Dodi : Quelle est votre nationalité? (What is your nationality?)

Dinda: Je suis Indonesia. Et vous? (I'm Indonesian. You?)

Dodi : Je suis indonesia also. (I'm also Indonesian.)

Dinda : Quel âge avez-vous? (How old are you?)

Dodi : J'ai 20s. Et vous? (I'm 20 years old, you?)

Dinda: J'ai 19ans. Merci beaucoup. (I'm 19 years old. Thank you very much.)

Dodi : De rien. (You're welcome.)

Dinda: Au revoir. (See you.)

Dodi : Au revoir. (See you.)

The quote above is part of a conversation between two teenagers who didn't know each other. The speech was delivered by a woman and a man. The context of the speech shows that the speaker and the interlocutor do not yet know each other. When a woman greets you by saying *Comment allez-vous?* and responded with the sentence: *Je vais bien merci, et vous?* How are you...I'm good, while you...'. The speech level marker in this utterance is shown through the respectful pronoun *V*. Apart from the use of this pronoun, the use of mitigating devices at the end of the sentence is also a speech level marker. Mitigating devices are linguistic elements used to refine speech. The existence of an effort to maintain distance between the speaker and the interlocutor in social interactions can also be expressed by the use of the pronoun *V*.

b. Pronoun Tu (T)

The pronoun *Tu* 'you' is used to address a single addressee. The choice of *T* to greet the interlocutor informs a lot about the speaker's view of his relationship with the interlocutor. The use of *T* in a balanced or reciprocal manner is used to greet someone you know or are familiar with. Reciprocal use of the pronoun *T* is widely used among young people, in families between parents and children and between adults to show closeness. In certain social interactions, when individuals specifically mark the differences between the social status of the speaker and the interlocutor who is higher, older or more powerful, they will tend to use *T* towards the interlocutor who is spoken to with a lower status, younger, and less powerful, and he will receive a *V* from his interlocutor. The use of *T* to indicate closeness can be seen in the following speech situation.

2. French Conversation When Meeting Friends

Rina: Bonjour Bimo? Comment allez-vous? (Hello Bimo? How are you?)

Bimo: Je vais bien, et toi? (I'm OK, how about you?)

Rina: J'ai also était bien, où vas-tu? (I'm fine too, where are you going?)

Bimo: Je veux acheter le livre. Au revoir? (I want to buy a book. See you?)

Rina: Soyez prudent sur la route. Bye. (Be careful on the road. See you later.)

Bimo's use of the pronoun T in the speech above is manifested in the pronoun tonique *et toi?* 'and you', and the sentence *, où vas-tu?* Where are you going... is a question that shows closeness. The use of this pronoun shows familiarity or the closeness between the speaker and his speech partner. For most French families, the pronoun T is used to greet each other between family members, whether parents to children, children to parents or between siblings. The use of T pronouns asymmetrically or non-reciprocally indicates a certain intention or relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor, for example a derogatory intention, a feeling of being closer or more familiar, etc.

3. Example of a French conversation between two men

The following is an example of a simple conversation in French between two male friends.

Joko : salute.

Dono: Salute.

Joko: Comment etes-vous? Long time no voyez-vous? (How are you? Long time no see?)

Dono: Je vais bien, avez-vous? (I'm OK, how about you?)

Joko: Moi also, la prochaine fois que nous y jouer? Je ne suis plus d'intérêt. (Me too, we'll play next time, okay? I've got something to do.)

Dono: Eh bien, je vais te revoir! (Okay, see you again!)

Joko: Oui, bye... (Yeah, see you...)

Dono: Bye... (See you...)

From the context of the speech, it is known that the speaker already knows one of his speech partners. The speech level markers in this utterance are T pronouns, V pronouns, the use of the expressions *salute* and *bonjour*. The speaker's choice of the pronoun T to address an interlocutor who has not been known for a long time and is the same age, depicts the world of young people who easily become familiar with one another in an informal setting. Apart from that, the pronoun T also implies equality between them. In several books it is said that it is easier for young people to se tutoyer 'greet each other with you', one of which Denuelle (1999: 31) says *la jeunesse tutoie très vite mais le 'vous' doit rester le norme auprès des personnes qu'on ne connaît pas* 'young people quickly greet each other but the use of *vous* 'you' should remain the norm for greeting strangers'. Thus, for young people who have just met or are not familiar, it is possible to greet each other with V. The existence of a friendly atmosphere is also supported by the use of the form of greeting '*salut*' '*hai*' (greeting) which is usually used by young people or only by them. which is already familiar.

At the same time, when the speaker is faced with an interlocutor who is older and unknown, he uses the expression *bonjour* to greet him. When compared with the expression of greeting that he conveys to partners of the same age, the expression of *bonjour* is more formal than the expression of *salute*. The expression of *salute* is a familiar expression of greeting that is used to greet each other between young people, or those who already know each other well. When meeting or when parting. When used at the end of a conversation or at the end of a meeting, this expression means 'bye'. Meanwhile, it is impossible to say the expression *bonjour* at the end of the meeting. Denuell (1999: 143) states that children are introduced to rules from an early age in dealing with adults or older people. They learn to greet V to people they don't know, say greetings with *bonjour madame* 'good morning/afternoon Mother' *bonjour monsieur* 'good morning/afternoon Sir', or greet them with *salute* 'hi' or with *bonjour* 'good afternoon/morning' just without the addition of *sir* or *mam*.

2.Level of Speech at the Syntactic Level in the Form of Clauses.

A clause is a grammatical unit in the form of a group of words which at least consists of a subject and a predicate and has the potential to become a sentence. Some clause constructions that function as elements of support in speech include *Je suis désolé*, *S'il vous plaît*, *S'il te plaît*, *Excusez-moi*, *Vous pouvez ... s'il vous plaît* and *Ça me ferait vraiment plaisir*. Apart from these clauses, there are also incomplete clause constructions and clauses that indicate code switching. It is said to be incomplete because there are several elements that make up the clause that should be there but are not presented. The deletion of this element mostly occurs in negative sentences which consist of the *ne...pas* element, but in practice the *ne* element is often omitted and is considered a form of impoliteness.

c. Argotic Lexicon

Argot language is a variation of French used to indicate the existence of groups in society. In general, the formation of argot is differentiated based on *metier* or 'occupation', and argot is created to indicate the existence of a particular group. There are two things behind its use. The first reason is the use of argot to show one's identity, and the second is for communication.

d. Verlan Lexicon

Verlan is a *walikan* language which is formed by reversing how to read it from back to front or from right to left, then writing it down. For example, the lexicon *fête* which means 'party' is read [f ε t], after undergoing a reversal process it changes to *teuf* [t œ f]. The use of language variations is intended to disguise speech so that it is not known by other parties.

e. Lexicon of Gros-mots or Gross Words

Le *gros mots* are rude and dirty remarks that offend honor and cause shame, because they relate to something of a sexual nature or relate to genitals or something disgusting. This variation is usually used by young people, lower social classes, *vulgarians* and *commoners*. In its widespread use, *les gros mots* or dirty words have the function of cursing, making fun of, degrading or making the objects mentioned become worthless.

2. Speech level at the syntactic level in the form of phrases

The level of speech in the form of a phrase is a form of level of speech that consists of two or more linguistic elements, which in French is called the *Group de nom*. Both parts are

determiners followed by nouns. Determinants can be articles, both definition and indefiniteness articles, demonstrative adjectives or possessive adjectives and can also be followed by prepositions.

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a. Polite Clause

The form of politeness in French can be expressed through the presence of a mitigating initial component in the long or short form Pouvez-vous or Est-ce que vous voudriez bien; as well as Excusez-moi, Je vous en prie or Je t'en prie as well as Pardon; the main element to express a request or command and the final component s'il vous plaît or s'il te plaît.

The occurrence of code switching in the following speech event functions more as an effort to facilitate communication between the speaker and the speech partner and the speaker's effort to respect the person he is speaking to. This can be attributed to the reputation of French people who are known to value their language very much (especially among the older generation), so that it is quite difficult for them to accept and use the languages of other nations.

b. Impolite Clause

In fact, what is meant by the term elements that reduce politeness is only as a balance to the term polite elements. It takes the form of a clause where one element is not present in the construction but its absence does not change the overall meaning, and this incomplete clause is used in oral and informal situations. Most incomplete clauses in French occur in the negative form. To negate a sentence, it is expressed by adding the ne pas element that surrounds the verb. Usually incompleteness is caused by the absence of the element ne in the clause. Apart from that, incomplete clauses are also caused by the removal of the vowel u in the pronoun Tu when it is followed by the verbs être and avoir. Events of omission of parts in this clause occur in spoken language among young people.

4 Conclusion

Based on the study of speech levels and the function of speech acts in conversations with friends, it can be concluded that basically in French there are language variations in the form of Speech Levels. The manifestation of the Speech Level includes the lexicon level and the syntactic level. Apart from that, there are code switching events in conversation which can also be indicated as a form of speech level

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