

Street cries in English and Indonesian with special reference to Makassarese

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Abstract

Street vendors' activities are interesting phenomena to be analyzed. Their cries (calls) in the streets, called street cries, existed since a long time ago. This study aims at investigating the forms and characteristics of street cries in Indonesian (Makassarese) compared to English. This study is a comparative study which uses descriptive qualitative in analyzing data. Indonesian (Makassarese) street cries were noted, recorded, and transcribed. Firstly, the result of this study shows that both Indonesian (Makassarese) and English vendors always mention the name of commodities and services they provided. Sometimes English vendors mention their prices and qualities. Secondly, the forms of Indonesian (Makassarese) street cries compared to English street cries almost the same. Some of Indonesian (Makassarese) street cries have brief (short) forms, and some of them are long, and vice versa. Thirdly, the characteristics of Indonesian (Makassarese) and English street cries mostly the same. They are using repetitive words, parallelism, degenerated (shortened) words, lengthened cries, participatory engagement, terms of address, and code-switching.

Keywords:

Street cries; forms; characteristics.

1 INTRODUCTION

Language connects people to each other in social relationships and allows them to participate in variety of activities in everyday life. One of the people activities in everyday life is the relation between vendors and customers that take place in the streets. Street vendors have been existed long time ago since selling and buying occurred. Wherever we go in public places, mostly in the street or sidewalks, we can find street vendors shout to attract customers' attention. Street vendors usually fall into two categories: vendors who have stalls in the sidewalks and vendors who are peddling or traveling around the neighborhood. Cries or shouts are commonly employed by street vendors all around the world, known as street cries. Street cries are the ancient vehicle of information which have powerful rhetorical strategy to attract audiences into making purchase.

2 PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION

Patterns of communication are modes of communication that we use frequently in certain situations or with certain people. Some patterns may be prevalent, that is, appearing in most communications regardless of the situation, while many are situation-specific, that is, used with certain people (friends, spouse, children, boss) or in certain situations (at work, in conflict, in fear). The ethnography of communication is concerned with patterns of communication. It is intended to discover regularities in language use, how they are organized and how they pattern in a much broader sense of 'ways of speaking.' It is believed that much of linguistic behavior follow regular patterns and constraints which can be formulated descriptively as 'rules.' Gumperz and Hymes (1972:36) state that rules of speaking are the ways in which speakers associate particular modes of speaking, topics or messages forms, with particular settings and activities.

Based on some studies, it is revealed that street vendors have their own ways of speaking that is different from other kind of occupations. It is related to Troike (1982), statement: "communication patterns according to particular roles and groups within a society, such as sex, age, social status, and occupation: e.g. a teacher has different ways of speaking from a lawyer, a doctor, or an insurance salesman." William Labov, a sociolinguist, have demonstrated based on his research in Martha's Vineyard in 1961, that what earlier linguists had considered irregularity or 'free variation' in linguistic behavior can be found to show regular and predictable statistical patterns.

The prominent theory of pattern of communication related to street vendors is the theory proposed by Ferguson. Ferguson in Wardhaugh (2006:52) says, "People participating in recurrent communication situations tend to develop similar vocabularies and similar features of intonation." Therefore, it is considered that street cries from one country to another country or one region to another, has similar features or characteristics. How is the vendors' verbal skill acquired? Street cries is so simple that even a child can do it. Uysal's study on vendors' cries in Turkey (1968:199) revealed that there were a great number of children crying their wares in the streets and bazaars of Turkey. While Bauman (in Eckert and Rickford (2001:67) who did a research in a weekly market of San Miguel de Allende (Mexico) in 1989, found a young boy of about eight who contributed calls like the one given in the following example:

Fifty the pile of broccoli.

Fifty.

Fifty the pile of broccoli.

Fifty.

3 STREET CRIES

Street cries let people know of the vendors arriving in the neighborhood, to inform the products or services offered, and to differentiate the vendor with other vendors with his/her distinctive cries. Vendors cries (shout) is considered as

the first step of selling strategies. Their cries are intended to draw customers into the point of negotiating to the sale itself. The simplest (brief) cries merely identify the vendors' commodities or price. Bauman (2001:61-62) states that the vendors' cries feature either of two essential kinds of information: the identity (name) and the price of the commodity, this expressive economy is the characteristics of cries/calls generally, in order to be identified in a moment:

The identity (name) of the commodity:

Ice, ice.

Ice, ice.

The price of the commodity.

One hundred pesos.

One hundred pesos.

Repetition, parallelism, and formulaic expression are three basic characteristics found on vendors' cries. Street cries depended heavily on different kinds of repetition and parallelism (repetition with variation). According to Tannen (2007:58) repetition enables a speaker to produce language in a more efficient, less energy-draining way. It facilitates the production of more language, more fluently. Vendors frequently use formulaic phrases, referring to a fixed form of words used regularly in the same manner. According to Tannen (2007:64) formulaic language (or fixed expression) is language repeated by multiple speakers over time. Like Lincoln Rorie, a fishmonger, his cries are rarely the same in separate performances. Rorie draws heavily on ready-made, formulaic phrases. A formula he uses frequently is "I got 'em" to begin each line. The same formula has been used by many criers. For example, a vendor's cries recorded in Harlem:

Ah got stringbeans

Ah got cabbage

Ah got collard beans (Dargan and Zeitlin, 1983:8):

Vendors who deal with perishable products such as fruits, vegetables, fish, and flowers, their description of their commodities often emphasizes on quality and value. A vendor may say, "Just picked up this morning" or "Fresh fish, they are alive."

4 ARABBER IN BALTIMORE (MARYLAND, USA)

The unique and interesting street vendors are the Arabber in Baltimore (USA). Dargan and Zeitlin (1983:31) state that the term "Arabber" is used in Baltimore to refer to peddlers who sell fruits and vegetables from horse-drawn carts. The Arabbers' cries known as "hollering." Those Arabbers, who travel through neighborhoods, use their hollering to attract attention, let potential customers know of their arrival, and urge them to come to buy. The Arabbers often employ sounds which will carry over a long distance, such as long vowels at the end of a phrase and falsetto voice. Many Arabbers also try to develop a distinctive cry, one that is recognizable as their own. Walter Kelly, an Arabber, emphasized the importance of having a unique cry so that he might identify himself to his regular customers as he drives his cart through Baltimore streets. Walter Kelly, who sells watermelons, tries to appeal the sympathy of his customers. He is hollering from a horse-drawn cart:

Well I whoop and I holler

'Till my throat gets sore,

If it wasn't for watermelon

Wouldn't holler no more.

Oh, watermelon,

Got 'em red to the rind

If you want black seed watermelon

Come to this wagon of mine.

Watermelo-o-o-o,

Black seed watermelon,

Watermelon, watermelo-o-o-o (Dargan and Zeitlin, 1983:4)

The calls are musical and often unintelligible. The hollers are actually more like songs. The vendors make it musical to draw attention and to help preserve their voice. Instead of yelling all the produce they have, they make it into a musical melody. They often advertise their produce by listing the items in song. The songs vary from person to person, but generally list their best produce items, especially out of season produce.

5 FORMS OF INDONESIAN (MAKASSARESE) AND ENGLISH STREET CRIES

There are twenty two (22) data of Indonesian street cries taken from the writer's neighborhood in Makassar and also twenty two (22) data of English street cries taken from the collections of Charles Hindley entitled "A History of the Cries of London. Ancient and Modern." The study shows that the forms of Indonesian (Makassarese) street cries compared to English street cries almost the same. Some of Indonesian (Makassarese) street cries have brief (short) forms and some of them are long, and vice versa. 'Brief' means the street vendor simply mention important thing about his commodity or service offered. The most important thing is the identity (name) of the commodity or service. Like the following examples:

Jalangkotek (*Jalangkote is a typical Makassar culinary snack whose shape is similar to pastel cakes*)

Jalangkotek!

Jalangkotek!

E! Jalangkotek!

Wanteks dan cap piring (*Wantek is a brand of clothing dyes that can make the color of your clothes back thick; Cap Piring is an electric carving tool with a shape resembling a pen that can be used to engrave anything on almost any type of surface such as wood, metal, plastic, leather, glass and other materials including dishes*)

Wanteks! Wanteks!

Cap piring!

Cap piring!

Wanteks!

'Long' means the street vendors not only mention the name of commodity or service offered but they sometimes mention the price, quality, or any kinds of persuasion. The following is an example of long form of Indonesian street cries recorded in the writer's neighborhood, trying to sell housewares:

Perkakas rumah tangga (*household utensils*)

Yang jauh merapat!

Yang rapat silakan melihat-lihat barangnya Bu!

Tinggal pilih barang-barangnya!

Ada tempat-tempatnya, ada panci-pancinya, gelas-gelasnya, ada sendok-sendoknya, ember-embernya, ada tapis-tapisannya, saringan-saringannya.

Tinggal dipilih!

Yaaa! Tinggal dipilih!

Silakan-silakan!

Tinggal dipilih barangnya!

Yang jauh merapat!

Yang rapat silakan melihat-lihat basrangnya Bu!

Like Indonesian (Makassarese) street cries, English street cries also have brief and long forms. The example of brief street cries are shown as follows:

Bread and meat

Bread and meat!

Bread and meat!

The next are the long ones:

Lavender

Buy my lavender!

Sweet blooming lavender!

Sweet blooming lavender!

Blooming lavender!

Old chair to mend

Any old chairs to mend?

Any old chairs to mend?

I'll make them quite as good as new

And make them look so neat

6 CHARACTERISTICS OF INDONESIAN (MAKASSARESE) AND ENGLISH STREET CRIES

The characteristics of Indonesian (Makassarese) and English street cries mostly are the same. Based on the study of street cries in some countries (London (UK), Baltimore (USA), Turkey, Mexico French, and Copenhagen), it is revealed that mostly have the same characteristics. Street vendors in all over the world tend to develop similar vocabularies and characteristics because they are in the same register. Register is the use of language by certain occupations for particular activities. Wardhaugh (2006:52) states that registers are sets of language items associated with discrete occupational or social groups. The characteristics of Indonesian (Makassarese) and English street cries are repetitive words, parallelism, degenerated (shortened) words, lengthened cries, participatory engagement, terms of address, and sometimes use code-switching.

6.1 Repetition

Repetition is the main characteristics of street cries. Vendors repeat their cries many times. They repeat the same words over and over again. Repetition is the strategy to be recognized by people or potential customers. They try to inform of their arrival and advertise themselves. Indonesian (Makassarese) street cries are full of repetition. Like the following example:

Jahit sepatu (*sewing shoes*)

Jahit sepatu!

Jahit sepatu!

Jahit sepatu!

English street cries also have lots of repetition:

Oranges*Oranges and lemons!**Oranges and lemons!**Oranges and lemons!***6.2 Paralellism**

Paralellism is repetition with variation. Paralellism is used by vendors when they mention more than one commodity or service. Paralellism occur both in Indonesian (Makassarese) and English street cries. The next is the example of paralellism in Indonesian (Makassarese) street cries:

Batagor, pempek Palembang (*Batagor is a typical Sundanese snack in the form of fried tofu baso, then poured with peanut sauce; The savory snacks from Palembang are chewy in texture with vinegar sauce with this sweet, sour and spicy flavor that has mushroomed as a roadside meal or restaurant*)

*Batagor!**Pempek Palembang!**Batagor!**Pempek Palembang!*

Here is the example of paralellism in English street cries:

Muffins and crumpets*Muffins, O!**Crumpets!**Muffins, today!**Crumpets, O!**Muffins, O!**Fresh, today!***6.3 Degenerated (Shortened) Words**

The cause of degenerated (shortened) words because vendors repeat the words many times and finally they could not mention the words completely, and also for time and energy saving. 'Ikan' (fish) shortened into 'kan,' 'sayur' (vegetable) shortened into 'yur', 'sapu' (broom) shortened into 'pu', and 'botol' (bottle) shortened into 'bot'. The following is an example of degenerated words in Indonesian (Makassarese) street cries:

Sapu (*broom*)*Pu!**Sapu!**Pu!**Sapu!*

The same phenomenon also occurs in the English street cries. A vendor who collects old clothes in English street cries crying out loudly "Ogh Clo" instead of "Old clothes". "Old Clothes" has degenerated into "Ogh Clo" and finally say "Clo!" only.

Old clothes*Old clo'!**Any old clo'!**Clo'!***6.4 Lengthened Cries**

Street cries are designed to attract people attention; therefore, the vendors lengthened their cries as much as possible and kept their volume high in order to arrest the attention of their customers. The vendors often employ sounds which will carry over a long distance. Like the words "Udang" (shrimp) lengthened into "Udaaang!!!" and "Sayur" (vegetable) lengthened into "Sayuuur!!!" Lengthned cries also employed by the Arabbers in Baltimore (USA).

*Watermelo-o-o-o,**Black seed watermelon,**Watermelon, watermelo-o-o-o (Dargan and Zeitlin, 1983:4)*

The lengthened cries and loud voice of the street cries in London used to be considered as public nuisances. The crying of street vendors sometimes very annoying, like the complaint of Jonathan Swift, writing to Stella on 13 December 1709, complained about the cry of a neighborhood vendor who nagged him early every morning:

"Here is a restless dog crying cabbages and Savoys, plagues me mightily every morning about this time. He is at it now. I wish his largest cabbage was sticking in his throat." (Shesgreen, 1990:37).

6.5 Participatory engagement

The writer finds out that most of the Indonesian (Makasarese) street cries in the writer's neighborhood are asking for participatory engagement by using "E!!!" and "Oi!!!" as the following example:

Beras (*rice*)*Beras!*

Beras!
E! Beras!

If we compare to English street cries, the street vendors mostly use ‘O!’, ‘Ho!’ and question (‘Who will buy?’) to get participatory engagement like the following examples:

Chimney sweep
I sweep your chimney clean, O!
Sweep your chimney clean, O!

Mackerel
Mackerel!
New mackerel!
Mackerel alive!
Mackerel alive, ho!

The Rabbit Man
Buy my rabbits!
Rabbits, who’ll buy?
Rabbit! Rabbit!
Who will buy?

6.6 Term of address

Indonesian (Makassarese) street vendors frequently use term of address to acknowledge the customers, such as: ‘Aji’ refer to ‘Haji’, for example: “Ikan Aji!!” ‘Sambaluuu!!!’ is a Makassarese word refer to customers. ‘Bu’ is commonly used in Indonesian culture refer to ‘Madam.’ The next is the example of Indonesian street cries using term of address:

Bolu (milkfish)
Bolu!
Bolu!
Masih goyang-goyang, Bu!

Terms of address is also used in English street cries. Vendors commonly acknowledge their customers by ‘Madam’, ‘Maid’ and one of street vendor acknowledge the customers by ‘My queens’. Like the following:

The Tinker
Maids, I mend old pots and kettles!
Mend old pots and kettles, O!

Peas and beans
Four pence a peck, green Hastings!
And fine garden beans.
They are all morning gathered,
Come hither, my queens.
Come buy my Windsor beans and peas,
You’ll see no more this year like these.

6.7 Code-switching

Code-switching apparently use by vendors. Pietro in Jendra (2010:10) states that code-switching is the use of more than one language by communicants in the execution of a speech. Indonesian (Makassarese) street vendors use code-switching as the effect of their ethnicity origin. People in Makassar are mostly dominated by Makassarese and Buginese. One of the vegetables vendor cried out loud:

Kue (Bahasa Indonesia refers to cake)
Kue!
Kue!
Beppa..., Bu! (Beppa is Buginese Language refers to cake)

Bauman (in Eckert and Rickford, 2001:73) recorded code-switching in the Tuesday market in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. The vendor of stockings switches from Spanyol to English:

Vale la pena.
It’s worth it.
Vea usted las medias de categoria.
Examine the classy stockings.
Cannon Mills.
Canon Mills.
How many?
I got it.
How many?
I got it.
Too muche, too muche.
Too much, too much.

Panty hose.

Panty hose.

One interesting phenomena in Indonesian (Makassarese) street cries is the use of ‘recorded voice’ to replace their verbal cries and sometimes use a little bit of music. The street vendors of jalangkotek (a kind of pastry) and bread (called ‘Sari Roti’), employ these kind of recording. The writer asks the jalangkotek seller of the reason she replaces her real voice into recorded one, she says: “To save energy, more practical.” The following is the example of street vendor’s recorded voice:

Sari Roti

Sari Roti

Roti

Sari Roti!

(Music)

Sari Roti

Roti

Sari Roti!

(Music)

7 CLOSING

The research of street cries is a fertile area to be explored in term of linguistic studies. And also, study street cries means we study the history of human social changes from time to time. It is advisable to make the documentation of the street cries in Indonesia because street cries become a dying art. In many big cities of the world street cries have died, and with them a picturesque aspect of these cities was also lost. Study and make the documentation of street cries is an effort to preserve them from oblivion.

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