



Article

## Phatic Marker in Bengkulu Malay Language

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### A B S T R A C T

The current study aims to describe the form and function of a phatic marker in Bengkulu Malay. The data were taken from the spoken language of Bengkulu Malay language, which consists of phatic utterances. The data were collected using the observational and conversational method. The analysis was done using contextual analysis, distributional method, and pragmatic identity method. The result shows there are two forms of phatic in Bengkulu Malay, they are particle form, including nah 'nah', yak 'yah', ay 'ai', way 'wai', awu 'ya', woy 'woi', wey 'wei', hoy 'hoi', and clitic form, including -lah and 'lah'.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Every language has a system that consists of several markers. These markers are fixed combination of unit markers which have a system. This system will function socially when speakers use the language in communication. Each language provides certain elements as a medium of communication so participants can communicate with one another. The form and elements vary as the uniqueness of each language. The form can be known through the structure of the language (speech act), the whole unified.

Every language has a certain function to indicate the purpose of speech and also function to express emotions. As a medium of communication, a language has a system that enables the participants to communicate for certain purposes. The communication can run as long as the participants can use specific words (word choices) to channel their idea. Among elements of language that play an important role in communication is the phatic form, which frequently used in spoken language.

The phatic form is used to initiate a conversation. It also uses to strengthen the relationship between the speakers. In other words, the phatic form is used to

fulfill the social aspect to build a communicative conversation (Kridalaksana, 1986). Syntactically speaking, this form has a specific position in the sentence and considered as an affirmative particle (Alwi, et al., 2003).

In Bahasa Indonesia, there are several types of affirmative particles, including *kah*, *-lah*, *-tah*, *-pun*. The particle (1) - *kah* is a clitic form which arbitrarily used in the interrogative sentence; (2). - *lah* is a clitic form; (3). - *tah* is a clitic form which used in the interrogative sentence where the speaker does not expect an answer (rhetoric question); and (4) *-pun* is use in the declarative sentences (Alwi, et al., 2003).

These four affirmative particles have a clitic function since these four-particle affirmations have in common with the concept of clitics as a bound form, which phonologically has no stress. They also cannot be considered as morpheme bound since they can occupy the phrases or clauses. However, they cannot be considered as free morphemes since they have no word characteristics.

The affirmative particles are categorized as a phatic category (Kridalaksana, 1986: 113-116; 2010: 23). These particles have 19 types with their respective

functions, including: *ah, ayo, deh, dong, ding, halo, kan, kek, kok, lah, lho, mari, nah, pun, selamat, sih, toh, ya, yah*. Each particle has specific function: (1) *ah* is used to emphasize rejections; (2) *ayo* is used to invite; (3) *deh* is used to insist by persuading, giving approval, guarantee; (4) *dong* is used to the to refine commands, emphasize the speaker's mistakes; (5) *ding* is used to to emphasize the correction of mistakes; (6) *halo* is used to start and confirm conversations on the phone, and greeting; (7) *kan* is used to to emphasize proof or denial; (8) *kek* is used to emphasize the details, orders, and replaces words; (9) *kok* is used to emphasize denial and can be used as a interrogative and usually place in the beginning of a sentence; (10) *-lah* is used to to emphasize imperative sentences and designations; (11) *lho* is used as an interjection to express surprise or emphasizing certainty; (12) *mari* is used to emphasize an invitation; (13) *nah* is used to turn the topic of conversation; (14) *pun* is used to highlight as specific part; (15) *selamat* is used to congratulate someone; (16) *sih* is used to replace the particle *-tah* and *-kan* as a form to emphasize a reason; (17) *toh* is used to highlight intentions; sometimes it has similar meaning to *tapi*; (18) *yah* is used to affirm a statement; (19) *yah* is used to express hesitation or uncertainty.

The phatic form is used to express the emotions of the speaker or the addressee as participants in the conversation (Wahya, 2018: 296). Conversations that start with a phatic form is used to open, develop, maintain, or strengthen conversations between participants. Most of the phatic categories are found in oral communication or spoken language, especially in a non-standard language. This variety of non-standard languages (phatic) is not common in four situations, including official communication, technical discourse, public speaking, and conversations with the respected addressee. In any situation, the phatic category tends to include regional language or dialects. Therefore, the use of the phatic category in a conversation can give a context and the situation of the utterance.

In spoken language, the use of phatic form can bring specific functions. The phatic form can be used to initiate a conversation, to greet participants and to emphasize something, or to express surprised (Hadi, 2017: 108). Moreover, the phatic form also provides politeness function to utterances, which

can be used to maintain social relations between participants. Phatic also can be used to enhance the conversation, which is not merely focusing on the message to deliver but also to maintain social relations. It usually uses to express politeness in the conversation (Faizah, 2012). On the other hand, the phatic form also has a negative function. They can be used as an impolite form, such as a curse, which can lead to conflict and violate social norms. Rahardi (2014: 150) mentioned that among the way to express impoliteness is to used phatic form. Therefore, a curse in a certain language can be identified by the impoliteness markers of phatic forms.

Cursing, as an impoliteness language, is considered as a negatively marked behavior. It is because it violates the social norms in the society. Here is the example of the phatic form *tak* in Javanese language:

“*tak jewer koe mengko nek ngeyel!*”

‘I’ll tweak your ear if you are stubborn!’

The conversation happens when the speaker is difficult to load a bulk of grass to the motorbike, while the addressee is playing. The speaker tries to warn the addressee using threatening language. The speaker speaks harshly and loudly while pointing at the speaker with wide-eyed eyes. This shows that the phatic form *tak* in Javanese is considered as impoliteness marker because it implies a threat.

The impoliteness evokes in communication due to social disharmony (Culpeper, 1996: 350). The social disharmony, for example, can be seen in communication strategies with which indicates face-threatening, which leads to disharmony. The concept of ‘face loss’ or ‘loss of face’ in the conversation is considered impolite if it makes someone lost his face. Therefore, if someone intentionally threatens the face of his addressee, which will lead to a conflict, it is considered as impoliteness of language.

The curse is a sign that someone is angry (Wahya, 2018: 298). It indicates that anger comes as a result of disharmony and face-threatening. The face can be lost, and someone needs to maintain his face. All actions to threaten the face must be neutralized by using polite utterances (Rahardi, 2008; 2017).

Impolite language can be a curse that contains dirty

words (profanity) or harsh words (Ljung, 2011: 8). These harsh words elicit as an expression of anger or annoyance that can be in the form of cursing or blasphemy. This context shows that curse as impoliteness of language because of the existing speech in the form of swear, blasphemy, oaths, curses, or scavenging.

Curse as impoliteness of language violates the principle of politeness (Leech, 1993: 206). This violation is because the center of the curse is the speaker's self. According to politeness principles, the self should be humbled, succumbs, gives more to others, and respects to show politeness. In the politeness, the speakers should depict himself as the oppressed. The politeness in the utterance can be measured using maxim (Leech 1993: 2006-2007). The more maxims used, the more polite the utterances could be. The six maxims of courtesy as a politeness principle reflect values. The maxim is in the form of a formula containing an order (which must be done) or a prohibition (which must not be done or must be avoided).

Phatic form had been a subject of research in different languages (Wahya, et.al, 2017; Susanti & Agustini; 2017; Rahardi, 2016; Malik, 2015; Isnaini; 2015; Yuliana, et.al, 2015; Rahardi, et.al, 2014; Bachari, 2007; Sutami 2005). Even within the Malay language, several researches focuses on phatic forms in the various dialect of Malay (Afifah, 2015; Faizah, 2012; Hadi, 2017). None of these studies focuses on the Bengkulu Malay language. Although some researches had described the swearing-in Bengkulu Malay (Rustinar, 2019; 2018; 2017a; 2017b; 2017c; 2017d; Saleh & Bsc; 2017; Nande, 2012), they only provide a limited discussion on the phatic form. This study is to find out the form and function of the phatic curse in the Bengkulu Malay language.

## II. METHOD

The data of this research are sworn conversations that have phatic words in Bengkulu Malay language. The data were collected using the observational method and conversational method (Sudaryanto, 2015; Mahsun, 2014). The techniques include recording, note-taking techniques, and interviews. The data were analyzed using a pragmatic identity method to describe the form and function of phatic

form in the Bengkulu Malay curse. The analysis begins with a contextual discussion using the SPEAKING theory by Leech (1993). Then, the analysis was continued by discussing the form and the function of the phatic. The result of analysis then presented in both formal (using table) and informal (using description) form.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result shows there is nine phatic forms in the Bengkulu Malay language, they are *nah*, *yak*, *ay*, *way*, *awu*, *woy*, *wey*, *hoy*, and *-lah*.

### Phatic form in Bengkulu Malay as curse markers

The results showed that there were 2 phatic categories for curse marker:

Lexical phatic, which consists of 8 forms: *nah*, *yak*, *ay*, *way*, *awu*, *woy*, *wey*, *hoy*. The phatic marker has a tendency to precede the clause (beginning position).

**Table 1. Lexical phatic category of cursing marker in Bengkulu Malay**

No	Phatic form
1	<i>nah</i>
2	<i>yak</i>
3	<i>ay</i>
4	<i>way</i>
5	<i>awu</i>
6	<i>woy</i>
7	<i>wey</i>
8	<i>hoy</i>

Clitical phatic. The clit in the form of the distribution of the phatic category is found at the end of the curse.

**Table 3. Clitic phatic of cursing marker in Bengkulu Malay**

No	Phatic form
1	<i>-lah</i>

In a clause, a phatic form may do not occupied any syntactic functions of the clause (Wahya and Adji, 2017: 172). It is considered as external element or extraposition. It does not have any lexical meaning when they appear in the form of particles. However, a phatic form may provide extra meaning to the sentence, which makes the difference when it comes to the phatic forms. Of course, the meaning

of phatic form depends on the context of speaking. The position of the phatic category of the curse of Bengkulu Malay language is an enclitic which attached to the preceded elements. Moreover, this phatic (*-lah*) has no syntactic functions in the clause.

Phatic as an impoliteness marker was reported by Rustinar (2017: 176) that particle *-lah* in Bengkulu Malay has curse functions and it attached to other words, for example:

“*mati beranaklah kau!*”  
‘You died (while) giving birth!’

### The function of the category of Fatis Markers Curse Malay Language Bengkulu

The results showed that 9 phatic categories had different functions in use as curses in Bengkulu Malay language. The function of this phatic there are 9 categories, the explanation is as follows.

Phatic *nah*, as in the context of curse ‘*kucing air*’ which has a function to turn the addressee attention to something else. The context of the conversation occurs when Speaker 1 (S1) shows Speaker 2 (S2) in the market buying vegetables. S1 was angry because she could not find S2 at her home when she came to collect the debt.

(1) “Nah, iko adonya kucing air ko!”  
Well, here is the sneaky girl!’

Phatic ‘*yak*’, as in the curse ‘*mati tegak*’, is used to confirm the agreement which told by the speaker.

The conversation occurs when S1 and S2 angry when they saw their neighbor’s daughter (S3). S1 argued that S3 had forced the mother to give her one million for traveling in the new year while they were poor.

(2) ”*Yak*, pikir ambo kalu mati tegak mak nyo”  
‘Yak, I think her mother will die soon.’

Phatic ‘*ay*’, as in the curse ‘*bengak nian*’, has a function to express doubt or uncertainty about a situation.

The conversation occurs when S1 watching the children swimming at the beach. Then, S2 pointed to the sea and shouted to warn the children that the sea had started to tide. When S1 saw that the children ignored the warning, she cursed.

(3) “**Ay**, ngapo anak orang itu masi kecil bengak nian?”  
‘What a stupid child you are?’

Phatic ‘*way*’, as in the curse ‘*pantek*’, has a function to emphasize the feeling of rejection. The conversation occurred when S2 was playing a game while S2 texting in his phones. S1 asked S2 to buy cigarettes and S2 declined the request. Ignorance makes S1 angry.

(4) “**Way**, lah melawan nian kau, pantek!”  
‘how dare you ignoring me!’

Phatic ‘*awu*’, in the curse ‘*anjing*’, has a function to emphasize. The context occurs when S2 sit on the motorbike while singing quietly after school. S1 slapped Q2 on his shoulder. S2 was going to get angry, but S1 responded normally.

(5) “**Awu** anjing, biaso bae”  
‘Easy, man’

Phatic ‘*wey*’, as in the curse ‘*pirik nian*’, has a function to show annoying. The conversation occurred when S1 accidentally knocks the soy sauce bottle, and it almost falls, then S1 screams. S2 saw the incident and immediately angry with cursing.

(6) “Mangkonyo pelan-pelan, **wey** ambo pirik nian kau ko kelak!”  
“Slow down or I’ll hit you!”

Phatic ‘*woy*’, as in the curse ‘*tino bunting*’, is used to emphasize the state/condition of the speaker. The conversation occurs when S1 sit on the motorbike in front of the cafe while talking to her male friends. When S2 came, S1 was asking why she came.

(7) “**Woy**, tino bunting ngapo kau ke siko?”  
‘Hey, pregnant woman, why yo come here?’

Phatic ‘*hoy*’, as in the curse ‘*keparat*’, is used to strengthen the intention of the speaker. The conversation occurred when S1 and S2 were going to the market to buy a lot of kitchen supplies. S2 is a child. He was tired to follow and whined, asking to go home. S1 was angry because she had not finished shopping yet. She had told the child not to go with her before, but the child insisted on following her. S1 became angry and cursed the S2.

(8) “**Hoy**, lah dikecek dak usah ngikut tadi. Keparat nian anak sorang ko!”  
“I told you before not to go me, you bastard! ’

Phatic *-lah*, as in the curse ‘*Matilah*’, is attached to another word and used as an affirmation. The particle mostly used with imperative sentences and strengthens the imperative meaning. The conversation occurred when S1 saw S2 buying candy at a food stall and asks for a treat. S2 rudely refused the request and made S1 angry.

(9) “*Matilah cepek kau!*”  
 ‘Go to hell’

After analyzing the data, the phatic category as curse marker in Bengkulu Malay language has forms and functions, as indicated in table 3.

**Table 3. The form and function of phatic as curse marker in Bengkulu Malay language**

No	Form	Function
1	Nah	To ask the speaker to turn his attention to something else
2	Yak	To affirm the speaker statement
3	Ay	To show hesitant or uncertainty
4	Way	To emphasize refusal
5	Awu	To emphasize
6	Woy	The emphasize the state or the condition.
7	Wey	To shows annoyance
8	Hoy	To emphasize the intention
9	-Lah	To emphasize the imperative meaning

From the analysis, it can be inferred that phatic form in Bengkulu Malay has certain characteristics: (1) phatic for is not used to emphasize the content of the information, (2) phatic form is used to enhance and to maintain the communication, (3) the meaning of phatic of is not defined, it depends on the context of communication, (4) phatic form is used directly in during the conversation, (5) phatic form can be used as swearing to indicate impoliteness and to show anger. This is in line with several previous research (Alwi, et.al, 2003; Kridalaksana, 2008; 2010; Faizah, 2012; Rahardi, et.al, 2014; Wahya, et.al, 2018).

Phatics form is used to express anger in the form of swearing. It indicates that the phatic form used as an effect of disharmony in social contact. This phatic form, as mentioned before, take a clitic form. Kridalaksana (2008: 38) mentioned that the clitic form could be attached in the initial position (proclitic) or following the word (enclitic). Bengkulu Malay language can be categorized as an enclitic form since most of the clitic forms follow the word. The *-lah* form in Bengkulu Malay does not occupy any syntactic function since it has a phatic function and considered as a clitic form. From the analysis of Bengkulu Malay language used, there are 8 phatic forms which has a role as particles, including *nah* ‘nah’, *yak* ‘yah’, *ay* ‘ai’, *way* ‘wai’, *awu* ‘ya’, *woy* ‘woi’, *wey* ‘wei’, *hoy* ‘hoi’. Meanwhile, there is only one clitic form of phatic form in Bengkulu Malay language, the *-lah* form.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that the phatic in curses as impoliteness in Bengkulu Malay language has several forms and functions. There are two general groups of phatic form as cursing in Bengkulu Malay language; they are 1) lexical phatic (*nah, yak, ay, way, awu, woy, wey, hoy*) which can be placed in front clauses. 2). clitic phatic (only one form *-lah*), which is attached to a word. Moreover, the phatic category as curse markers has 9 different functions: (1) To ask the speaker to turn his attention to something else; (2). To affirm the speaker’s statement, (3) To show hesitant or uncertainty; (4) To emphasize refusal; (5) To emphasize; (6). Faty Wey’s function in the context of this invective is to emphasize resentment; (7). To shows annoyance (8) To emphasize the intention; and (9) To emphasize imperative meaning.

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