

## Politeness Employed by Hermanto Tanoko in Hermanto Tanoko Podcast

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### ABSTRACT

This research examined Hermanto Tanoko's politeness while asking questions and using address terms to Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat on his podcast. The writer also compared Hermanto Tanoko's politeness to Jehian Panangian Sijabat and Tahir to find the similarities and differences. This research cites Watts (2003) for the politeness theory. Since politeness is cultural, the writer employed notions from Javanese culture by Suseno (2001). This qualitative research analyzed utterances made by Hermanto Tanoko. Hermanto Tanoko shows *hormat* (respect) by utilizing personal name, family term, or a combination of family term and personal name to address older people and using personal names to address younger people. Hermanto Tanoko used *rukun* (harmonious) while asking questions by hedging, being indirect, displaying attention or compassion, and joking. Despite their age gap, Hermanto Tanoko is polite to both guests which might have happened due to the fact that Hermanto Tanoko is raised in the Indonesian (Javanese) culture.

**Keywords:** politeness; first-order politeness; Javanese culture; asking questions; addressing terms; podcast.

### INTRODUCTION

Currently, podcast popularity is steadily expanding. Audiences of all ages and genders are beginning to seek entertainment, as well as insights and information, by listening to or seeing podcasts. As the popularity of podcasts increases, creators come up with the idea of providing both audio and video podcasts. It is essential for a podcast presenter to be polite, particularly in the Indonesian (Javanese) culture. This is because podcasts have a significant impact on the people who listen to them and watch them online. *Hermanto Tanoko Podcast* is a podcast video that provides insights on business, economic, and other inspirational topics by inviting experts and is hosted by Hermanto Tanoko, the CEO of well-known brands in Indonesia. This study attempted to determine how Hermanto Tanoko, the host of the *Hermanto Tanoko Podcast*, showed politeness to his younger and older guest speakers. This research also aimed to determine the similarities and differences between the politeness of his older and younger guest speakers. Therefore, the research questions of this study are: (1) How does Hermanto Tanoko employ politeness in asking questions and addressing Tahir? (2) How does Hermanto Tanoko employ politeness in asking questions and addressing Jehian Panangian Sijabat? (3) What are the similarities and differences of politeness used by Hermanto Tanoko to Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat?

For this study, the main theory used is Watts' (2003) theory of politeness. According to Watts (2003), there are two types of politeness: first-order politeness and second-order politeness. According to Watts (2003), first-order politeness refers to the lay interpretation of politeness whereas second-order politeness is a concept in a sociolinguistic theory that universalized the

concept of politeness. Therefore, in this study the writer focused on first-order politeness that also considered the impact of culture, which in this case Indonesian (Javanese) culture.

## METHODS

For this study, the writer used a qualitative approach. The source of data were taken from Hermanto Tanoko Podcast, specially the first part of the podcast with Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat which can be streamed via YouTube. For the data, the writer takes the utterances made by Hermanto Tanoko to his guest speakers, Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat. The writer manually makes the transcript by using a modified verbatim transcription method. Once the writer got the transcription, the utterances made by Hermanto Tanoko that contain questions were highlighted in green and utterances that contain addressing terms were highlighted in yellow. Then the writer analyzed each utterances based according to the theory of politeness by Watts (2003) and followed by the theory of Indonesian (Javanese) culture by Suseno (2001)

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the writer elaborates the findings of the study. This section will be divided into three parts: (1) Hermanto Tanoko's politeness when asking questions and addressing Tahir (2) Hermanto Tanoko's politeness when asking questions and addressing Jehian Panangian Sijabat (3) The similarities and differences of politeness used by Hermanto Tanoko to Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat.

**Table 4.1 Findings of Hermanto Tanoko's Politeness When Asking Questions to Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat**

	<b>Podcast Video with Tahir</b>	<b>Podcast Video with Jehian Panangian Sijabat</b>
<b>Tag Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hedging opinion</li> <li>- Showing sympathy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hedging opinion</li> </ul>
<b>Wh- Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Showing sympathy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indirectly</li> <li>- Showing interest</li> <li>- Joke</li> </ul>
<b>Choice Questions</b>	Not found	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hedging opinion</li> </ul>
<b>Yes-no questions</b>	Not found	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repeating</li> </ul>

**Table 4.2 Findings of Hermanto Tanoko’s Politeness When Addressing Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat**

	<b>Podcast Video with Tahir</b>	<b>Podcast Video with Jehian Panangian Sijabat</b>
<b>Addressing Terms to Call</b>	Hermanto Tanoko addressed using the term ‘Pak Tahir’	Not found
	Hermanto Tanoko addressed using the term ‘Pak’	Not found
<b>Addressing Terms as Second-Person</b>	Hermanto Tanoko addressed using the term ‘Pak Tahir’	Hermanto Tanoko addressed using the term ‘Jehian’
	Hermanto Tanoko addressed using the term ‘Bapak ’	Not found
<b>Addressing Terms as Third-Person</b>	Hermanto Tanoko addressed using ‘Prof. Dr. Dato Sri Tahir’	Hermanto Tanoko addressed using ‘Jehian Panangian Sijabat’
	Hermanto Tanoko addressed using ‘Pak Tahir’	Not found
	Hermanto Tanoko addressed using ‘Tahir’	Not found

**Hermanto Tanoko’s Politeness When Asking Questions and Addressing Tahir**

Throughout the course of the podcast, Hermanto Tanoko was seen asking questions to Tahir using a combination of tag questions and wh-questions. When asking questions, Hermanto Tanoko employed a form of politeness by uttering questions with hedging opinions and showing sympathy. The examples are as follows:

- (1) Itu seorang anak melihat seperti itu gimana perasaan Pak Tahir waktu itu? (T.12)  
[As a son, watching something like that, how was your feeling at that moment?]

In example (1), Hermanto Tanoko also employed wh- type of question to Tahir. In this utterance, Hermanto Tanoko was employing the wh- question because he would like to hear Tahir’s childhood stories. This can be considered polite because instead of jumping directly to the question, Hermanto Tanoko tries to formulate his question to make it less threatening by adding the utterance “Itu seorang anak melihat seperti itu ...” (As a son, watching something like that, how was your feeling at that moment?) to show his sympathy for Tahir’s childhood trauma.

Next, the writer discusses Hermanto Tanoko’s Politeness When Addressing Tahir. Throughout the video podcast of the *Hermanto Tanoko Podcast* that included Tahir, Hermanto Tanoko addressed Tahir by using a variety of addressing words that have different functions. First,

Hermanto Tanoko used to call Tahir. One of the examples, Hermanto Tanoko used the term ‘Pak Tahir’.

- (2) Terima kasih sekali saya, Pak Tahir, ... (T.2)  
[I really am thankful, Pak Tahir ...]

From example (2), Hermanto Tanoko thanked Tahir for coming to his podcast and did some interviews in the middle of Tahir’s busy schedule. After saying thank you to Tahir, Hermanto ended the sentence by addressing Tahir with the term “Pak Tahir”. According to Suseno (2001), in order to address older men, some of the common addressing terms used in Indonesia are *Pak* or *Bapak*. In this utterance, Hermanto Tanoko acknowledges that Tahir is several years older than him and probably has wider experience than Hermanto. Therefore, Hermanto Tanoko addressed Tahir by using the term *Pak* in order to emphasize that he respected Tahir as an older person and people with high social status. Hermanto Tanoko also addressed Tahir as second-person which shows as follows:

- (3) Ini kedatangan Bapak sungguh suatu kehormatan. (T.3)  
[*Bapak’s* presence here is an honor.]

As seen in example (3), at the beginning of the podcast, Hermanto Tanoko addressed Tahir by using the term *Bapak*. Instead of using the term *kamu* or *Anda*, Hermanto Tanoko decided to use the term *Bapak* to substitute the second-person pronoun. According to Suseno (2001), the term *Pak* or *Bapak* is to show *hormat* (respect) to older people. Therefore, Hermanto Tanoko might use the term *Bapak* because he would like to emphasize deference and *hormat* (respect) toward Tahir as people who are older in age. Hermanto Tanoko also addressed Tahir as third-person which can be seen in the example below:

- (4) Jadi ini, Sobat Sukses seorang Tahir, ... (T.7)  
[So, Sobat Sukses here is Tahir, ...]

In example (4). It seems that Hermanto Tanoko was using the term ‘Tahir’ only because he positioned Tahir as people who is highly favored and honored, which is seen by the word “sosok” (figure) and “tokoh”(figure) right before he mentioned Tahir’s personal name. This phenomenon also happens when someone addresses a person who is highly favored, such as addressing President *Joko Widodo* by his nickname *Jokowi*. In this case, Hermanto Tanoko is indeed younger than Dato Sri Tahir. So, Hermanto Tanoko was using the word *Tahir* not to act impolitely but to position Tahir as a highly favored person.

### **Hermanto Tanoko’s Politeness When Asking Questions and Addressing Jehian Panangian Sijabat**

Throughout the podcast, Hermanto Tanoko was seen asking questions to Tahir using a combination of all types of questions including Yes-no questions, Wh- question, a choice question, and tag question. The examples are as follows:

- (5) ..., bahkan Jerome sampai sekarang masih kuliah ya? Masih belum kerja ya? (J.17)

[... even Jerome is still in college, isn't he? He has not worked yet, hasn't he?]

In example (5), Hermanto Tanoko uses the tag question because he would like to confirm that Jehian Panangian Sijabat's younger brother, Jerome, is still in college but he was not quite certain about it. It can be seen through the word "ya?". Hermanto Tanoko tried to employ hedging opinions that do not describe specific truths or beliefs. According to Suseno (2001), It is also a way to talk implicitly which helps avoid any directness that can cause any disruption to the existing harmonious situation.

- (6) Sebelumnya, saya ingin tahu ini apa papa mama memang seorang pengusaha? (J.3)  
[Beforehand, I would like to know, whether your father and mother are entrepreneurs?]

In example (6), the indicator of politeness can be noticed in Hermanto Tanoko's utterance to Jehian Panangian Sijabat through the utterances that say "sebelumnya saya ingin tahu ini" as his way to be indirect. According to Suseno (2001), it is highly appreciated if someone can formulate an utterance as indirectly as possible.

- (7) Jadi tetap fokus untuk orang-orang Indonesia yang ada di luar negri atau orang luar negri yang bikin konten untuk orang Indonesia? (J.7)  
[So are you focusing on Indonesians that are abroad or foreigners that create content for the Indonesian audience?]

In addition, in example (7), Hermanto Tanoko uses the choice question which can be seen by the conjunction *atau* (or) and because he also gave Jehian Panangian a choice between focusing on Indonesians that are abroad or foreigners that create content for the Indonesian audience and Hermanto Tanoko was expecting Jehian to pick one of the choices that he made. The indicator of politeness can be seen in Hermanto Tanoko's utterance to Jehian Panangian Sijabat because Hermanto Tanoko was employing the concept of *kerukunan* (harmonious) by making a question that is not specific and giving Jehian Panangian Sijabat a space to answer so their conversation can go smoothly.

- (8) Oh, SD sudah mulai jualan? (J.20)  
[Oh, you have been selling things since elementary?]

Last, in example (8), Hermanto Tanoko was using the yes-no type of question. It is categorized as a yes-no question because it can be answered simply by a yes or no. According to Suseno (2001), in Indonesian (Javanese) culture, there is a concept called *ethok-ethok* (pretending), which can be found as a way to show politeness by asking basic questions or a question that the speaker does not expect a real answer. Instead, it is just a way to show attention or to make the conversation keep going smoothly. This utterance is considered politeness because Hermanto Tanoko was repeating what Jehian Panangian Sijabat had said previously in order to seek agreement.

- (9) Ini saya baru ketemu ya ini acara *IdeaCloud*, tapi saya sangat tertarik dengan kisah-kisah dari Jehian yang luar biasa (J.2)  
[I just met him at IdeaCloud Event, but I am really interested in the amazing stories from Jehian]

Furthermore, Hermanto Tanoko also addressed Jehian Panangian Sijabat by his personal name, Jehian as seen in example (9). According to Suseno (2001), the common term in Indonesia in order to address younger people is by using the term 'dhik'. However, instead of using the term *dhik*, Hermanto Tanoko decided to address Jehian by his name. According to Moeliono (2017), one of the factors that can affect the choice of personal pronouns is social distance. Whereas *dhik* means younger brother or sister and is common in a family, especially when a parent calls their children. Therefore, Hermanto Tanoko probably does not use the term *dhik* because his relationship with Jehian Panangian Sijabat is not really close enough that he can use the family context address term.

### **Similarities and Differences of Politeness used by Hermanto Tanoko to Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat.**

From the observation, the writer found a similarity in how Hermanto Tanoko employed politeness in asking questions and addressing Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat. First, the writer discusses the similarity in asking questions. Through the study, the writer found that Hermanto Tanoko employed tag questions with hedging opinions to both guest speakers. The example is provided below:

- (10) Dan pada akhirnya ekonomi keluarga Pak Tahir membaik, ya? (T.29)  
[In the end, Pak Tahir's family's financial condition is getting better, isn't it?]
- (11)..., bahkan Jerome sampai sekarang masih kuliah ya? Masih belum kerja ya? (J.17)  
[... even Jerome is still in college, isn't he? He has not worked yet, hasn't he?]

It appears that Hermanto Tanoko utilized hedging opinion as a sort of politeness, as seen in examples (10) and (11). In example (10), Hermanto Tanoko was being positive by uttering a hedging opinion that Tahir family indeed got better after the whole struggle that he had to pass through when Tahir was a young boy. Hermanto Tanoko, on the other hand in example (11), was asking Jehian Panangian Sijabat a series of leading questions in order to confirm once more whether it is true that Jehian's younger brother is still enrolled in college. As a result, the similarity shows that Hermanto Tanoko used the tag question with a hedging opinion either to the more senior guest speaker or to a person who was younger than him. These similarities in asking questions might happen because Hermanto Tanoko was trying to employ the concept of *hormat* (respect) to both of his guest stars, no matter the age difference. According to Suseno (2001), it is indeed a culture in Indonesia where people keep employing politeness although the addressee is younger or older. It is expected that Indonesians can show *hormat* (respect) to older people, and can show consideration and a fatherly way to treat younger people (Suseno, 2001).

From the observation, the writer also found similarities in how Hermanto Tanoko employed politeness in addressing terms to Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat. The example is provided below:

- (12) ... yaitu, Dato Sri Prof. Dr. Tahir (T.1)  
[... that is, Dato Sri Prof. Dr. Tahir]
- (13) Dia adalah Jehian Panangian Sijabat (J.1)  
[He is Jehian Panangian Sijabat]

As seen in examples (12) and (13), Hermanto Tanoko employed politeness by introducing both of them in a proper way by mentioning full names. This similarity happened because Hermanto Tanoko was applying the concept of politeness in Indonesian (Javanese) culture, that is the concept of *hormat* (respect). According to Moeliono (2017), as a form of politeness, the younger person should show *hormat* (respect) to the elder person while the older must show tolerance and a considerate attitude toward the younger. Therefore, Hermanto Tanoko used *hormat* (respect) by mentioning Tahir's academic degree as well as the title he received from the Malaysian Governor for his role in solving business-related issues in Malaysia, "Dato Sri." Whereas for Jehian Panangian Sijabat, Hermanto Tanoko introduced Jehian Panangian Sijabat by his full name to indicate that Hermanto Tanoko acknowledged and considered Jehian Panangian Sijabat as a great businessman.

The second similarity is that Hermanto did not use the common second-person pronoun, *kamu* or *Anda*. Instead, he addressed his guest speaker by their personal name. The examples are as follows:

(14) Saya juga ingat, Pak Tahir waktu demikian keinginan untuk menonton tenis meja tetapi tidak berani mengutarakan ke orang tua (T.16)  
[I also remember, when *Pak Tahir* eagerly wanted to watch a table tennis match but was afraid to express to parents]

(15) Jadi Jerome itu yang pertama kali Jehian bantu? (J.6)  
[So Jerome is the first person that Jehian helps?]

According to Moeliono (2017), the second-person pronoun in Indonesia is *kamu* and *Anda*. However, according to examples (14) and (15), Hermanto Tanoko did not use the second person pronoun either Tahir or Jehian Panangian Sijabat. According to Errington (1988) as in Kuntjara (2009), Indonesian (Javanese) culture, especially the "priyayi" group relies heavily on what is *pantes* (proper) and common in the context. Therefore, these phenomena might happen because Hermanto Tanoko was employing what he thought proper in the context of talking to Tahir or Jehian Panangian Sijabat.

On the other hand, the writer also find some differences in Hermanto Tanoko's politeness when asking or addressing Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat. In terms of asking questions, Hermanto Tanoko employ more type of questions to Jehian Panangian Sijabat compared to Tahir. The first difference is that Hermanto Tanoko employed tag wh- questions while showing sympathy to Tahir. On the other hand, to Jehian, Hermanto Tanoko employed wh- questions while seeking agreement, noticing hearer, and emphasizing the hearer's interest.

In terms of using address terms, there is also a difference. Hermanto Tanoko uses the term *Pak*, *Bapak* or combines the term *Pak* with Tahir's name. According to Moeliono (2017), the younger person needs to show *hormat* (respect) to the older person as an act of politeness. One way to show *hormat* (respect) is by acknowledging the concept of hierarchy that is highly employed in Indonesian society. On the other side, when Hermanto Tanoko was addressing Jehian Panangian Sijabat, Hermanto Tanoko just uses personal names without any common term that is commonly used by older people to younger people in Indonesian (Javanese) culture, that is the term *dhik*.

According to Suseno (2001), it is customary for Indonesian to apply superiority and inferiority according to each position in the social position. However, Hermanto appears not to utilize the superiority privilege that he has, instead he lowers himself in order to create a more comfortable atmosphere.

## CONCLUSION

As a result of this study, Hermanto Tanoko used the Javanese principles of *rukun* (harmonious) and *hormat* (respect), which are considered to be fundamental components of polite behavior in Javanese as well as in Indonesian society. In conclusion, Hermanto Tanoko treated his guest speakers with the two most important ideas of politeness in Indonesian (Javanese) culture, namely *rukun* (harmonious) and *hormat* (respect), without making any distinctions based on the age gap between him and his guest speakers: Tahir and Jehian Panangian Sijabat. To conclude, Hermanto Tanoko is a person who has a low-key personality and has a deep respect for the norms that already exist in his culture.

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