

Terms of Address Preferences and the Role of Chineseness of Two Chinese Surabayanese

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ABSTRACT

This research is conducted to find out the terms of address preferences and the role of Chineseness of two Chinese Surabayanese. What terms of address do the informants of Chinese Indonesians in Surabaya prefer to be addressed at home? Why do they prefer to be addressed that way? How do their terms of address preferences show their Chineseness as Chinese Indonesians? The research used two informants of Surabayanese Chinese Indonesians, one (male) is from the *totok* family and the other one (female) is from the *peranakan* family. Qualitative approaches combined with semi-structured and open-ended interviews are used. Thematic analysis is used to analyze the findings. The findings show that the family's background played an important role in the terms of address preferences. The one from *totok* family still maintained Chinese terms of address, while the one from *peranakan* family had already abandoned the Chinese terms of address.

Keywords: terms of address; chineseness; chinese indonesians

INTRODUCTION

There are so many aspects in Sociolinguistic study, one of them is about terms of address. Term of address is one of the interesting aspects of Sociolinguistic study. By learning terms of address, from the way the speaker addresses the interlocutor, it can reveal social and interpersonal relationships. In addressing others, speakers evoke personal identities, and create and define relationships such as close/distant, personal/professional, peers/rank-differentiated, etc. (Fitch, 1998). Wardhaugh (2002) summarizes a variety of social factors that usually govern our choice of address terms, such as particular occasion, the social status or rank of the other, gender, age, family relationship, occupational hierarchy, transactional status, ethnicity or degree of intimacy.

Wardhaugh (2002) also indicates that different societies and cultures certainly have different norms or preferences in their choices of address terms. Terms of address are used in all kinds of languages to address other people. Terms of address can be found in all ethnicities all around the world. Terms of address in English-speaking countries appeared first in Britain, and then spread to the United States, Canada, Australia and other former British colonies (Wardhaugh, 2002). Compared with China, English-speaking countries have less complicated terms of address. The use of terms of address can be using first, middle, or last names. Within families, the use of terms of address is quite clear, the way to address relatives from maternal and paternal lineages are the same, i.e., grandfather, grandmother, uncle, aunt, and cousin.

However, the use of terms of address in Chinese kinship terms is much more complicated. The way to address relatives from maternal lineages is different from the paternal ones. For instance, the way they address the grandparents from the maternal lineage is different from the way they address the grandparents from the paternal lineage and so do the way they address the uncles, aunts, cousins, and other relatives are different between the maternal and paternal lineages. There are distinctive terms for relatives in paternal side and maternal side

(Liu; Zhang; Zhang, 2010). Thus, it is clear enough for the listeners to differentiate their kinship relation by only the way they address the addressees. Moreover, the kinship term of address in Chinese culture gives more weight to males than females and has terms for both paternal and maternal sides; both the nuclear family and the extended family are emphasized. Since the kinship system in China is generation- and age- oriented, there are hierarchical relationships between family members (Liu; Zhang; Zhang, 2010).

In Indonesia, besides using their names, certain terms of address like “*Pak*”, “*Bu*”, “*Mas*”, “*Mbak*”, “*Kak*”, “*Dik*”, and so on are often used in Indonesia, while in Chinese Indonesian community, these terms of address, such as “*Koh / Ko*” (older brother), “*Cik / Ce*” (older sister), “*Suk*” (uncle), “*A’i*” (aunt), and so on are quite familiar in Surabaya especially (Kuntjara, 2010). Speaking of Chinese Indonesians, the use of Chinese terms of address is very complex due to the history of Chinese Indonesians back in the past. Most Chinese people who came to Indonesia were men and they married to local women. This mixed marriage created hybrid language and so did the hybrid terms of address, i.e., “*Koh De*” [*Kokoh Gede* or older brother], “*Cik De*” [*Tacik Gede* or older sister], and many more (Kuntjara, 2007). Thus, the use of terms of address of Chinese Indonesians is different from any other Chinese speaking countries in the world.

Furthermore, Chinese Indonesians always have problems with their Chinese identity. Chinese Indonesians have been discriminated against, ever since the Dutch colonial era, where Chinese descendants were placed in separated social segregation which differed from the indigenous people, so the social position of Chinese Indonesian was perceived differently with the indigenous ones (Ninawati; Setiawan; Suparman, 2019). After the independence of Indonesia also did not abolish the gap between Chinese Indonesians and the indigenous ones. In 1965, the New Order regime assigned the policy of assimilation in order to blend these two groups. The Chinese Indonesian people were forced to blend into Indonesian. Not only the Chinese people had to change their Chinese names into Indonesian sounding names (Keppres No. 127/U/Kep/12/1966), but also the names of their stores had to be changed into Indonesian. Chinese Indonesians were urged to assimilate with the local people and abandon their language, culture, and old tradition (Thung, 2000; Kuntjara, 2001). As a result of the assimilation program by the New Order regime, many Chinese Indonesians have lost their Chinese identity, and of course this also affects the use of proper Chinese terms of address. This had happened for thirty two years (1966-1998). After the fall of Suharto in 1998, during the reign of Abdurrahman Wahid, in 2000 Chinese people in Indonesia were allowed to publicly celebrate the Chinese ceremonies and rituals, learn Mandarin, and even Confucianism was approved to be one of the beliefs in Indonesia. One of the effects of this was the rise of “Mandarin Fever” in Indonesia. So many schools suddenly had Mandarin as the foreign language on their curriculum and many Mandarin courses opened at that time. There were many trilingual schools (English, Indonesian, and Chinese) suddenly spreading throughout Indonesia. (Hoon and Kuntjara, 2019).

Now it is familiar to hear people address other people by using Chinese terms of address. This research is conducted to find out about (1) What terms of address do the informants of Chinese Indonesians in Surabaya prefer to be addressed at home? (2) Why do they prefer to be addressed that way? (3) How do their terms of address preferences show their Chineseness as Chinese Indonesians?

The informants were selected from Chinese Indonesians from Surabaya, aged between 40 to 50 years old, one male and one female, disregarding their marital status. The age range (between 40 to 50 years old) is considered the most suitable for this research since people in that age range experience both the New Order era and the Post Suharto era, so their choice of terms of address preferences can be determined by their historical backgrounds. The gender is chosen one male and one female because the terms of address used to address male and female are

different, each gender is used as a representative. Marital status is disregarded because this research only focuses on the terms of address preferences and the role of Chineseness of the two informants. One of the informants belongs to the *totok* family and the other belongs to the westernized or *peranakan* family.

A *totok* refers to those Chinese who had a Chinese-orientated upbringing and who use Chinese as the medium of communication even though they were born in Indonesia. Similarly, a *peranakan* refers not only to the Chinese with mixed ancestry, but also to those pure-blood local-born Chinese who cannot speak Chinese at all (Hoon, 2006). Different family backgrounds (*totok* and *peranakan* or westernized) are chosen to find out about the relation between the family backgrounds with their terms of address preferences and also the relation with their Chineseness as Chinese Indonesians.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Term of address means a word, name, or title that is used when speaking or writing to someone. How to name or address another, whether it is by title (T), by first name (FN), by last name (LN), by a nickname, by some combination of these, or by nothing at all is called the term of address (Wardhaugh, 2015).

Moreover, according to Duckling (1990), term of address is an endearment, a friendly or unfriendly expression, polite, neutral, or insulting, can only be made when something is known of the overall relationship, if any, between speaker and hearer, and the way in which the vocative is uttered at a given moment.

However, in Chinese, the term of address is more complex because the way to address from the maternal lineage is different from that of the paternal one. The Chinese terms of address are classified into only two types, which are kinship address and address in social intercourse (Chen, 2010). Kinship term of address itself is divided into two kinds, the relative terms of address and the non-blood term of address, while term of address in social intercourse is divided into three, post and rank terms of address; name address; and general terms of address.

Although lately some Chinese people have abandoned the use of proper terms of address, while they are having face-to-face communication with the people they know well, the others still maintain the correct terms of address because of some reasons. First, they are used to attract people's attention, to remind the hearer one's professional status or the relationship between the speaker and the hearer. Second, they are used to show politeness and the difference in social class and the degree of respect in certain occasions. Third, they are used to reflect social information about identity, gender, age, status and the complex social relationships of interlocutors in a speech community (Yang, 2010).

As for Chinese Indonesians, the use of terms of address is much more variable than the Chinese terms of address due to the historical backgrounds of Chinese Indonesians. Chinese people had come to Indonesia since around the fifth century. Since the purpose of their arrival in Indonesia was for trading, most Chinese people who came to Indonesia were men. Since it took months to travel from China to Indonesia by sea, they usually stayed in Indonesia for a while longer. Many of them married local women and stayed in Indonesia. This mixed marriage between Chinese men and local women created hybrid language and culture, it influenced the term of address as well, for instance to address older brother, some Chinese Indonesians used *Koh De* or *Engkoh Gede* or they use *Cik De* or *Tacik Gede* to address older sister. They mixed the Chinese term of address with the local language. They mixed the language from their fathers

who came from China with the local language which they acquired from their mothers (Kuntjara, 2007).

Moreover, during the Dutch colonial era, many Chinese Indonesians sent their children to HCS (*Hollandsch-Chineesch School*), a school for Chinese Indonesians established by the Dutch colonial in 1908. From HCS, they learnt how to speak Dutch and many of them used Dutch terms of address to address people, like *Oom* (uncle), *Tante* (aunt), *Oma* (grandmother), *Opa* (grandfather), and many more. They even mixed Dutch with the Javanese, like *Tantelik* or *Tante Cilik*. This term of address is similar to Javanese terms of address, like *paklik*, *pakdé*, or *bulik* and *budé* (Kuntjara, 2007).

Identity is something to differentiate between one people to another, based on their characteristics such as ‘race’, colonization and empire, ethnicities, sexuality, gender, disabilities and social class, et cetera (Whetherell & Mohanty, 2010). While social identity is the portion of an individual’s self-concept derived from perceived membership in a relevant social group (Turner & Oakes, 1986). The different characteristics between Chinese Indonesians and the indigenous ones creates the identity of Chinese Indonesians. The Chinese Indonesians also have different characteristics from other Chinese people from other countries. It can be seen from the language they use, the habit, the culture, the food they eat, and many other characteristics which have already been mixed with the Indonesian ones, thus it gives a special characteristic of Chinese Indonesian which sometimes is called the hybridities of Chinese Indonesians.

ANALYSIS

The male informant, Budi (pseudonym), is from the *totok* family. He is 43 years old, married with two sons. His eldest son is at the twelfth grade (third grade of senior high school) and his second son is at the ninth grade (third grade of junior high school). Both of them attend private schools where the majority of the students are Chinese Indonesians and have Mandarin lessons almost every day. From his appearance, he looks “so Chinese”, which means the strangers will definitely distinguish him as Chinese. He has fair skin, slanted eyes, and his accent is typically like a Chinese Indonesian’s accent.

Budi’s grandparents came from *Xianyou* County, eastern *Fujian* Province, Mainland China around the 1930s. Although his parents were born in Indonesia, they went to Chinese schools. His father had finished his senior high school before Chinese schools were closed in 1965, while his mother had only finished her junior high school. They did not attend Indonesian schools after Chinese schools had been closed in 1965. Budi is the youngest child of his family. He has three older sisters. Budi’s wife also comes from the *totok* family. His wife’s grandparents also came from Mainland China around the 1930s.

At home, Budi’s parents speak Indonesian, Javanese, and a little Chinese to their kids. That is why this male informant can speak a little Chinese. He even still has a Chinese name and he also gives Chinese names to his sons. He also still maintains Chinese rituals like praying to his ancestors on special occasions like Chinese New Year and other Chinese celebrations. Most of his friends are mostly Chinese Indonesians and they can speak Chinese, too. Although he does not join any Chinese communities, his parents joined some Chinese communities when they were younger. Before the pandemic, like other Chinese families, his family always gathered at the elderly’s house to celebrate Chinese New Year and gathered at his parents’ house on his parents’ birthdays.

The female informant, Karina (pseudonym), comes from a westernized or *peranakan* family. She is 42 years old and still single. She does not live with her family anymore, but she

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often visits her parents' house. From her appearance, she looks like Chinese. She has fair skin and slanted eyes. Although her accent is not as "Chinese Indonesian" as Budi's, strangers will still distinguish her as Chinese from her physical appearance.

Karina's parents attended Indonesian Catholic schools. Her father graduated from high school while her mother had studied architecture in university but had not graduated before getting married. Karina is the third child in her family, she has an older brother, an older sister, and a younger sister. Karina and her family do not speak Chinese, but she knows her family name in Chinese and has a Chinese name although she never uses it and she even does not remember her Chinese name. Her grandparents also could not speak Chinese, they spoke Dutch instead. Her ancestors came to Indonesia from Mainland China a long time ago, she even does not know she is from what generation of Chinese Indonesian.

Karina had studied abroad since junior high school. She got a scholarship to study in Singapore when she was in junior high school and she continued her bachelor degree in Sydney, Australia. Because she had studied abroad since she was in junior high school, her friends came from many different parts of the world. When she was in Australia, she hung out with her friends from Hong Kong, India, Australia, and many more. She rarely had Chinese Indonesian friends.

Terms of Address Used to Address the Two Informants at Home

The terms of address used at home are influenced by the family's background. As Chinese Indonesians, the use of terms of address are more varied than any other Chinese people from other countries. Some Chinese Indonesians who come from *totok* family might still apply the correct Chinese terms of address, but the ones from *peranakan* or westernized family might use Chinese or Indonesian or English or Dutch or even local dialect terms of address. Some even use the combination of all of them.

Budi admitted that he was addressed by his Chinese name by his parents, siblings, wife, and his other family members.

"Nama Mandarin. Semua keluarga manggilnya nama Mandarin. Dan sayapun suka juga dipanggil dengan nama Mandarin karena kebetulan juga nama saya Budi ini kan identik dengan nama Indonesia jadi saya kurang suka juga." [Chinese name. All of my family members call me by my Chinese name. And I prefer to be addressed with my Chinese name because my name Budi is an Indonesian name, I do not really like it.]

In addition, Budi's sons addressed him and his wife with "Papa" and "Mama" instead of "Daddy" and "Mommy", "Ayah" and "Ibu" or other terms of address. Budi has nephews and nieces from his three older sisters. His nephews and nieces addressed him with "Auk". His older sisters married men from the *totok* families, too. His three brothers-in-law's families came from *Fuqing* County, China. According to Budi, "Auk" was a *Fuqing* (local dialect) term of address to address an uncle from maternal lineages.

Moreover, Budi's wife comes from a *Hakka* family. Budi's nephews and nieces from his wife addressed him with "Kujong" and addressed his wife with "Kuku".

"De'e dipanggil 'kuku' sama ponakan nya (perempuan sendirian), aku dipanggil kujong." [She is addressed with "kuku" by his nephews and nieces (she is the only female from her siblings), I am addressed with "kujong"].

From his answers, it could be seen that the nephews and nieces from his wife were from his wife's brothers because his wife was the only daughter (*perempuan sendirian*). Budi added that "Kuku" and "Kujong" were the terms of address to address aunts and uncles from paternal

lineages. It seemed like his family still maintained the proper Chinese terms of address to show the rank and position in the family's hierarchy and they also differentiated the terms of address used to address people from paternal and maternal lineages (Chen, 2010).

From his answer above, it could be seen that he was addressed by Chinese terms of address at home. The way he answered the questions was so fast and confident. He did not hesitate to answer that he was being addressed with his Chinese name by his parents, wife, and siblings, while his sons addressed him with "*Papa*", the Chinese term of address, instead of calling him "Daddy", "*Papi*", or even "*Bapak*" or "*Ayah*".

Unlike Budi, Karina was addressed with her name by her parents, older brother, and older sister. Even her younger sister also addressed her with her name. The way they addressed one another between siblings was also using names instead of special terms of address, but she still addressed her parents with "*Papa*" and "*Mama*".

"*Manggil nama juga sih. Tapi kalo ke orang tua masih manggil "Papa" "Mama".*"
[With their names, too. But to address parents, we still use "*Papa*" "*Mama*".]

Karina had three nephews and two nieces from her siblings and they addressed her with "*Tante*". "*Tante*" was a term of address used by Dutch spoken families to address aunts. It was also popular among the Dutch educated people to address older women with "*Tante*" although they were not blood related. Karina added that all her nephews and nieces from her brother and sisters called her "*Tante*". Her family did not differentiate the nephews and nieces from her brother and sisters to call her "*Tante*". In Chinese terms of address, they differentiate the terms of address used to address aunt from paternal and maternal lineages (Chen, 2010). Since Karina's family used "*Tante*" which was a Dutch term of address, they did not differentiate the terms of address whether from paternal or maternal lineages.

From her answers, it seems like her family did not use any kinds of terms of address, neither Indonesian like "*kakak*" nor Chinese terms of address like "*Koko*" or "*Cece*" nor any other terms of address for the parents to their children and for one another between siblings. They just used the names to address one another. However, the children still used "*Papa*" and "*Mama*" to address their parents. It showed that although Karina's family was western oriented, they still addressed "*Papa*" and "*Mama*" to the parents. It meant that they still respected the parents with a higher status and position than the children. In Chinese culture, the terms of address are used to indicate people's status and to show the position in the family's hierarchy (Chen, 2010).

In addition, since Karina's grandparents spoke Dutch and were Dutch educated, they used Dutch terms of address, like "*Tante*" for her nephews and nieces to address her. During the Dutch colonial era, many Chinese Indonesians sent their children to HCS (*Hollandsch-Chineesch School*), a school for Chinese Indonesians established by the Dutch colonial in 1908. From HCS, they learnt how to speak Dutch and many of them used Dutch terms of address to address people, like *Oom* [uncle], *Tante* [aunt], *Oma* [grandmother], *Opa* [grandfather], and many more (Kuntjara, 2007). Although her family was much westernized, they still used terms of address to address people from higher generations. "*Papa*" and "*Mama*" were used to address the parents, while Karina herself was being addressed with "*Tante*" by his nephews and nieces.

In conclusion, since Budi came from the *totok* family, he still maintained the Chinese terms of address to be used at home. His family still used the proper Chinese terms of address to address everyone in his family to show the rank and position in his family's hierarchy, from

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paternal or maternal lineages. While Karina came from a *peranakan* or westernized family, her family was not familiar with Chinese terms of address. They got used to addressing the siblings, older or younger, only with their names. However, to address people from higher generations in the family, Karina's family still applied terms of address like "*Papa*", "*Mama*", and "*Tante*" to show the position of higher generations.

The Terms of Address Preferences of the Two Informants to be Addressed at Home

As discussed in the previous section, Budi preferred to be addressed with his Chinese name instead of his Indonesian name. Being born in a *totok* family made Budi become more familiar with his Chinese name rather than his Indonesian name. It was because some *totok* parents still used Chinese names to address their children at home. They gave Indonesian names to their children because during the New Order era, all Chinese Indonesians had to change their names to Indonesian sounding names as stated on Keppres No. 127/U/Kep/12/1966 (Koning, 2007) and they had to assimilate with the local people and abandon their language, culture, and old tradition (Thung, 2000; Kuntjara, 2001). So, for Chinese Indonesians, especially the ones from the *totok* family, having Indonesian names was considered as a formality to obey the New Order's regulation. They just used their Indonesian names outside their home, like at school, public spaces, and stated on their formal documents.

Moreover, besides his Chinese name, Budi also liked to be addressed with "*Papa*" by his sons instead of "Daddy". In the first section, when he was asked how his sons addressed him and his wife, he answered "*Papa*" and "*Mama*". His reason why he preferred to be addressed with "*Papa*" instead of "Daddy" or "*Ayah*" or "*Papi*" or any other terms of address, he replied, "*Ya, kita kan dari keluarga Tionghoa, lebih pantes lah dipanggil "Papa" "Mama" daripada "Daddy" "Mommy".*" [Because we come from a Chinese Indonesian family, it is more appropriate to be addressed with "*Papa*" "*Mama*" instead of "Daddy" "Mommy".]

As for Karina, she is more comfortable to be addressed with her name instead of any special terms of address. Actually, Karina had a Chinese name, but she never used it and she even did not remember what her Chinese name was. When she was asked why she preferred to be addressed with her name, she replied that she did not only prefer to be addressed with her name, but she had been also addressed with her name since she had been a child, she had never been addressed with other terms of address.

"Bukan lebih suka lagi tapi emang dipanggil nama, dari kecil sampek besar dipanggil nama. Gak pernah ada masa dipanggil "Cece" "Koko" gitu." [Not only prefer, but I have also been called with my name since I was a child. We have never had a period of time using terms of address like "*Cece*" or "*Koko*".]

Karina's parents had never attended Chinese school before, they did not speak Chinese at all. Even her grandparents also did not speak Chinese at all, they spoke Dutch instead. That was why her family was not familiar with Chinese terms of address. They did not teach their children how to address one another with the proper Chinese terms of address. As a result, they addressed one another with their names, no matter to the children or to older or younger siblings.

Moreover, Karina had studied abroad since she was in senior high school and her friends came from many different parts of the world who did not use terms of address like Chinese Indonesians. No wonder she was not familiar with any terms of address but her name.

To compare both Budi and Karina, it was clear to see that the family background took an important role on the terms of address preferences. Budi, who came from the *totok* family,

preferred to be addressed with the proper Chinese terms of address. Even he preferred his Chinese name rather than his Indonesian name. Karina who came from a *peranakan* or westernized family preferred to be addressed with her name even by her younger sibling. Her family did not apply the correct Chinese kinship term to show the rank and position in her family.

The Relation between the Chineseness and the Terms of Address Preferences of the Two Informants at Home

As previously discussed, Budi's terms of address preferences to be addressed at home was his Chinese name by his parents, siblings, and; it indicated that he and his family identified themselves as Chinese people instead of Indonesian although they had been living in Indonesia for such a long time. In addition, Budi also preferred to be addressed with "*Papa*" instead of "Daddy" or "*Ayah*" or "*Bapak*" by his sons. It was clear enough that he positioned himself as a Chinese Indonesian rather than indigenous Indonesian although he was born and raised in Indonesia.

The way Budi's nephews and nieces addressed him also used the proper Chinese terms of address which differentiate the position and rank in the family's hierarchy, from paternal and maternal lineages. It showed that Budi still maintained his Chineseness as a Chinese Indonesian.

In Karina's family's case, they did not apply this because they addressed the siblings no matter older or younger siblings with their names. However, although Karina's family was much more westernized than any other Chinese Indonesian family, she still addressed her parents with "*Papa*" and "*Mama*" instead of "Daddy" and "Mommy" or even with their names. Here, Karina's family still showed their social identity as Chinese which showed the rank, status and position of the parents in the family's hierarchy. Although lately some indigenous Indonesians used "*Papa*" and "*Mama*" to address their parents, still the words "*Papa*" and "*Mama*" were derived from Chinese language.

Karina's nephews and nieces still addressed her with "*Tante*", instead of her name. Many Chinese Indonesians who had studied in Dutch schools, used "*Tante*" to address an aunt. Karina's grandparents were the ones who spoke Dutch and they passed this to their next generations. Karina's family's habits, especially from the way her family addressed one another within the family showed that they did not show their Chineseness as much as Budi's family. Instead, they were more like *peranakan* of a Dutch spoken family. They did not apply the special Chinese kinship terms, but they still use terms of address to address people from higher generations.

CONCLUSION

Family's background plays an important role in the terms of address preferences. People from the *totok* family tend to be familiar with Chinese terms of address rather than people from *peranakan* or westernized families. Although lately the use of Chinese kinship terms is gradually abandoned by many young Chinese Indonesians (Kuntjara, 2010), some people from *totok* family still apply the use of correct Chinese terms of address to show the rank and position in the family's hierarchy, from paternal or maternal lineages (Chen, 2010).

However, for some people from *peranakan* or westernized families, the use of proper Chinese terms of address is considered unimportant anymore. Some people mix it with other language's terms of address, like Indonesian, Dutch, English, or even Javanese, and some people even do not use it anymore, especially by the younger generations.

Budi, who comes from *totok* family, still maintains the use of Chinese terms of address within his family, while Karina, who comes from a *peranakan* or westernized family, does not use any Chinese terms of address within her family. Budi still maintains Chinese culture, language, and tradition and he prefers to be addressed with Chinese terms of address at home by his family. As for Karina, since her family do not speak Chinese at all and she has been westernized because she had studied abroad for more than ten years, she prefers to be addressed with her name without any specific terms of address at home. Chinese kinship terms are usually used to show the rank and position of the family's hierarchy (Chen, 2010), but since Karina's family is Dutch educated, they do not use any kinship terms to address older siblings. They only use the Chinese kinship terms, "Papa" and "Mama" to address the parents and Dutch term of address, "Tante" to address her by her nephews and nieces. From their terms of address preferences, it can be concluded that Chineseness is still important to be maintained within a family for Budi, while for Karina, it is not important to maintain her Chineseness.

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