Patterns of Kinship Address Term Usage
in the Malay Families of Marok Kecil Village:
A Sociolinguistic Study

Siti Nuraini Wahidatun Nisa[1], Cece Sobarna[2], Asri Soraya Afsari[3]
[1,2,3]Program Studi Ilmu Linguistik, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung
Corresponding E-Mail: siti20004@mail.unpad.ac.id

Abstract

This study investigates the patterns of kinship address term usage within the family interactions of the Malay community in Marok Kecil Village, Lingga Regency, Riau Islands. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the research examines how speakers choose address terms based on relational roles such as age, kinship status, and social hierarchy. Data were collected through observation, audio recordings, field notes, and structured interviews with 100 participants from 50 families, covering a range of age groups and kinship positions. The findings reveal three dominant usage patterns: nonreciprocal downward (older to younger), nonreciprocal upward (younger to older), and symmetrical reciprocal (among peers). The choice of address terms is shaped by factors such as generational differences, situational formality, and sociocultural norms. The empirical findings delineate three predominant usage patterns: nonreciprocal downward (utilized by older speakers towards younger interlocutors), nonreciprocal upward (employed by younger speakers towards older interlocutors), and symmetrical reciprocal (observed among peer-status individuals). For instance, parental figures consistently employed nonreciprocal upward terms like "ayah" (father) or "ibu" (mother) when addressing their progenitors, while older relatives might use "adik" (younger sibling/general reference) for younger family members. Among agemates, symmetrical reciprocal forms, exemplified by "Ikak" or personal appellations, were ubiquitously observed. Quantitative analysis revealed that approximately 85% of observed intergenerational interactions conformed to these nonreciprocal patterns, while reciprocal patterns characterized virtually all (approx. 100%) peer-to-peer exchanges. The study employs Ervin-Tripp's (1972) alternation and co-occurrence rules to interpret how linguistic behavior reflects familial roles and traditional values in the Riau Malay context. These findings contribute to a deeper

understanding of how language is used to encode social relationships and maintain cultural continuity within traditional family systems.

Keywords: *Address Terms, Kinship, Sociolinguistics, Riau Malay*

Introduction

Every individual must master the ability to speak effectively so that the intended message can be clearly understood, and this heavily depends on the speaking situation. A speech situation involves various factors such as the identity of the speaker and the hearer, the time, place, and the overall context. Speech has communicative characteristics and is governed by certain rules to ensure mutual understanding. Speech situations arise due to differences in understanding between the speaker and the hearer, as well as other linguistic aspects (Hymes D. , 1987).

Furthermore, the term "Speaker" is abbreviated as Pn, while "Hearer" is abbreviated as Pt. A speech act is a condition in which Pn expects their message to be understood by Pt, usually with support from the surrounding environment during the speech. In many cases, more than one type of speech act is used in a single utterance. Therefore, paying attention to the speech situation is essential, including in the use of address terms (Yule, 2006).

Language plays a central role in constructing, maintaining, and negotiating social relationships, particularly within the familial domain. In traditional societies such as the Riau Malay community, language is not merely a tool for communication, but also a carrier of social identity, hierarchy, and cultural values. Among the various linguistic elements, kinship address terms are vital in indexing social relationships such as age, generational status, and social proximity. These terms are deeply embedded within the sociocultural fabric of Malay communities and function as linguistic indicators of respect, intimacy, and authority.

In the Riau Malay context, address terms are not only reflections of relational roles but also vehicles for sustaining traditional values across generations. The Riau Malay language, regarded as one of the most conservative and culturally symbolic Malay varieties in Indonesia, maintains a rich and stratified kinship system that is observable in both nuclear and extended family settings. This richness is especially preserved in rural areas like Marok Kecil Village, where cultural continuity is less affected by urbanization and linguistic homogenization. Understanding how these address terms are used provides insight into how language helps preserve cultural norms and structure interpersonal behavior.

Numerous scholarly works have examined address terms across various ethnolinguistic groups in Indonesia. Wibowo and Retningsih (2015) for instance, provided a comprehensive mapping of address forms among Indonesian university students, uncovering the influence of ethnic and regional diversity on the formation and function of such terms. Didi (2016) focused on Bengkulu Malay, distinguishing between formal and informal address patterns based on social

proximity and status. In a Minangkabau context, Novendra et al. (2017) illustrated how address terms reinforce politeness and uphold social harmony. Similarly, Susylowati (2020) explored hierarchical address forms in the Kraton of Surakarta, showing how linguistic choices signal noble lineage and social stratification. While these studies contribute significantly to the understanding of address systems, the majority emphasize the forms and categorizations of address terms, often overlooking the interactive patterns of their usage within the immediate family sphere.

Despite the growing body of literature on Indonesian address terms, there remains a paucity of research focusing specifically on how address terms are applied in familial interactions, particularly in the sociocultural context of the Riau Malay community. Most studies stop at documenting lexicons or discussing the symbolic meanings of address terms, without analyzing how Pn dynamically select and employ these forms in naturalistic family conversations.

The underlying rules that guide address term selection such as patterns of reciprocity and asymmetry based on relational roles have not been sufficiently explored within this specific sociolinguistic environment. Moreover, there is limited application of theoretical frameworks such as Ervin-Tripp's (1972) model of alternation and co-occurrence in this area, which could offer a more structured understanding of how linguistic choices reflect social roles and relationships.

This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the patterns of kinship address term usage in the Malay families of Marok Kecil Village, Lingga Regency, Riau Islands. The primary aim is to analyze how Pn choose address terms in familial contexts based on the interlocutor's age, generational level, and relational proximity. By applying Ervin-Tripp's (1972) alternation and co-occurrence rules, this research aims to identify the sociolinguistic factors that influence address term choice. The novelty of this study lies in its specific focus on usage patterns in everyday family interactions, offering a micro-level view of how language use reflects social norms and familial roles in a local Malay context.

Method

This research adopts a descriptive qualitative design, which is suitable for uncovering the sociolinguistic features of address terms used within Malay families in the Riau Islands. A qualitative approach is deemed appropriate because it allows for an in-depth understanding of the natural use of language within its social context, especially when focusing on how address terms reflect social relationships and cultural values in a family setting. This design enables the researcher to interpret meaning, patterns, and variations in language use that are not readily quantifiable.

The research was conducted in Marok Kecil Village, located in Lingga Regency, Provinsi Kepulauan Riau, a region recognized for its preservation of traditional Malay culture and language. This village was purposively selected due

to its linguistic richness, minimal external linguistic influence, and strong adherence to cultural norms, making it an ideal site to investigate authentic address systems within familial interactions.

The sample comprised 100 participants from 50 families, representing diverse kinship roles, age groups, and social positions within the family. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, with criteria including: (1) being a native Pn of Riau Malay; (2) representing at least one generational level (e.g., child, parent, grandparent); and (3) actively participating in daily family interactions. Demographically, the participants ranged in age from 7 to 80 years old, with varied educational backgrounds (from elementary school to university) and occupations (e.g., homemakers, fishermen, farmers, teachers, civil servants).

Data were collected through a combination of participant observation, non-participant observation, audio recording, field notes, and structured interviews. These techniques allowed the researcher to obtain naturally occurring speech data and support it with direct elicitation when necessary.

The primary method employed was Simak (observational technique), which included Simak Bebas Libat Cakap (SBLC), where the researcher did not directly engage in the conversation but observed and recorded naturally occurring discourse; and Simak Libat Cakap (SLC), where the researcher partizcipated in interactions to collect contextual language use. Audio recordings were vital for accurately capturing speech acts and address terms, while field notes complemented the recordings by documenting social context, Pn identity, and setting.

Instruments for data collection included digital voice recorders for capturing spontaneous speech, observation sheets for field notes, and an interview guide developed based on the sociolinguistic framework of Hymes (1972) and Ervin-Tripp (1972). These instruments were designed to ensure that both the form and function of address terms, as well as the socio-cultural background of their usage, could be captured effectively.

Ethical research practices were strictly followed. All participants provided informed consent, with oral consent for minors obtained from their guardians. Identities were anonymized in both transcription and reporting. This study also received approval from local cultural leaders.

Data saturation was determined when no new address term patterns or usage variations emerged during the last five family observations. This indicated that the data collected had reached informational sufficiency. To ensure inter-rater reliability, the transcribed data were independently coded by two trained linguists, with coding discrepancies discussed until consensus was reached.

The data collection process spanned six weeks, from July to mid-August 2024, coinciding with school holidays and communal gatherings, which facilitated natural speech recording.

The data analysis technique involved three main steps: (1) data transcription and glossing, (2) classification and categorization of address terms (based on morphemic structure and kinship relation), and (3) interpretation within the framework of sociolinguistics. The classification distinguished between monomorphemic and polymorphemic forms, while the analysis of usage patterns focused on the alternation rules (context-based address term selection) and co-occurrence patterns, as proposed by Ervin-Tripp. Each address term was analyzed for its morphological structure, semantic meaning, and sociocultural function.

Throughout the process, the researcher also employed introspective techniques, using personal linguistic intuition as a native Pn of the local Malay dialect to interpret and validate the meanings of utterances. This introspective approach is supported by Sudaryanto's (2015) guidance that a linguist may serve as a valid informant when researching their own language variety.

The reliability of data was strengthened through triangulation involving direct observation, recordings, interviews, and literature validation with local cultural experts, including the village elders and adat leaders. The use of varied data sources and analytical lenses ensures that the findings accurately reflect the sociolinguistic realities of address term use in the selected community.

Table 1: The Table of Data Collection

No	Terms of Kinship	Form of Address	Characteristics
1	*Ibu*	Monomorphemic	Upward
2	*Mak*	Monomorphemic	Upward
3	*Nenek*	Monomorphemic	Upward
4	*Kakak*	Monomorphemic	Upward
5	*Ayah*	Monomorphemic	Upward
6	*Bapak*	Monomorphemic	Upward
7	*Atok*	Monomorphemic	Upward
8	*Abang*	Monomorphemic	Upward
9	*Ikak*	Monomorphemic	Equal
10	*Adek*	Monomorphemic	Downward
11	*Kau*	Monomorphemic	Equal
12	*Mak Long*	Polymorphemic	Upward
13	*Mak Ngah*	Polymorphemic	Upward
14	*Mak Ucu*	Polymorphemic	Downward
15	*Mak Mok*	Polymorphemic	Upward
16	*Mak Cik*	Polymorphemic	Upward
17	*Mak Tam*	Polymorphemic	Upward
18	*Mak Njang*	Polymorphemic	Upward
19	*Mak Oteh*	Polymorphemic	Upward
20	*Nek Long*	Polymorphemic	Upward

21	*Nek Ngah*	Polymorphemic	Upward
22	*Nek Ucu*	Polymorphemic	Upward
23	*Nek Mok*	Polymorphemic	Upward
24	*Nek Cik*	Polymorphemic	Upward
25	*Nek Tam*	Polymorphemic	Upward
26	*Nek Njang*	Polymorphemic	Upward
27	*Nek Oteh*	Polymorphemic	Upward
28	*Pak Long*	Polymorphemic	Upward
29	*Pak Ngah*	Polymorphemic	Upward
30	*Pak Ucu*	Polymorphemic	Downward
31	*Pak Mok*	Polymorphemic	Upward
32	*Pak Cik*	Polymorphemic	Upward
33	*Pak Tam*	Polymorphemic	Upward
34	*Pak Njang*	Polymorphemic	Upward
35	*Pak Kumis*	Polymorphemic	Upward
36	*Tok Long*	Polymorphemic	Upward
37	*Tok Ngah*	Polymorphemic	Upward
38	*Tok Ucu*	Polymorphemic	Upward
39	*Tok Mok*	Polymorphemic	Upward
40	*Tok Cik*	Polymorphemic	Upward
41	*Tok Tam*	Polymorphemic	Upward
42	*Tok Njang*	Polymorphemic	Upward
43	*Tok Kumis*	Polymorphemic	Upward

Table 2: The Chart of Patterns of Address Term Usage
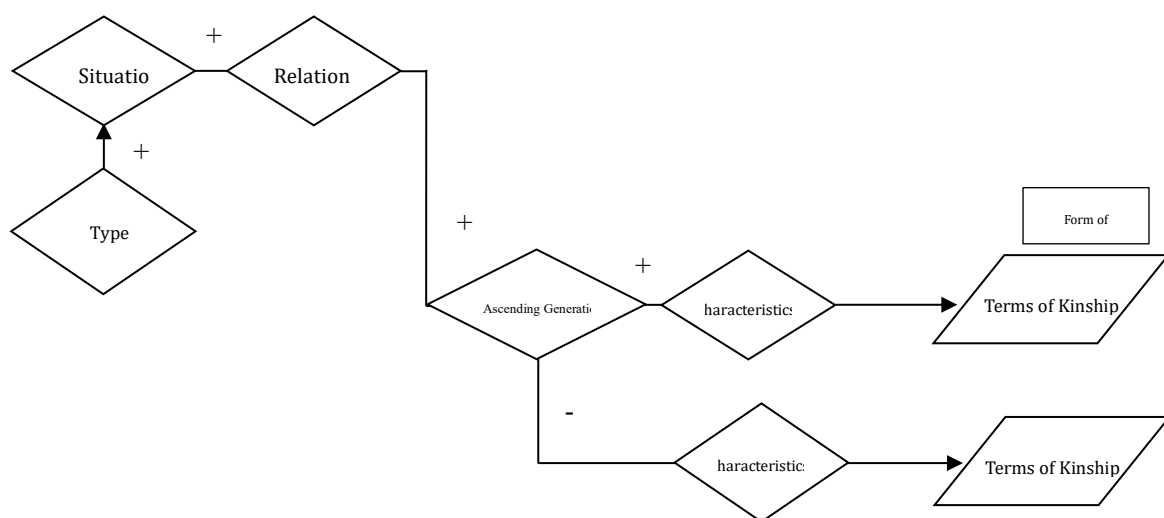
The stages for determining the pattern of use in kinship terms are as follows:

1. Identifying the gender of Pt.
2. Observing the situation in the speech between Pn and Pt.
3. Observing the social relationship that occurs between Pn and Pt.
4. Paying attention to the generational differences between Pn and Pt.
5. Showing the results of each branch, the "+" and "-" signs describe certain conditions or decisions. The "+" sign symbolizes a true or yes condition, which means it meets the criteria for the branch. Conversely, the "-" sign symbolizes a false or no condition, which means it does not meet the criteria for the branch.
6. Analyzing the characteristics or positions in the family such as the order of children in the family, or the physical characteristics of Pt.
7. Combining the results of the analysis to determine the kinship terms used.

Results

This study identified clear patterns in the use of address terms among members of the Riau Malay community in Marok Kecil Village, particularly within the domains of nuclear and extended family interactions. The findings were organized based on the nature of kinship relationships and the direction of communication (upward, downward, or equal status). Three main patterns of address term usage were observed: (1) downward nonreciprocal, (2) upward nonreciprocal, and (3) reciprocal symmetrical usage, each influenced by age, generational status, and relational proximity.

1. Address Terms in Nuclear Families

In nuclear family settings, parents consistently used nonreciprocal downward address terms when speaking to younger family members, especially children and grandchildren. These included shortened or affectionate terms such as *adik*, *abang*, *kakak*, or personal nicknames, depending on the child's age and gender. In contrast, children used nonreciprocal upward address terms such as *ayah*, *ibu*, or *mak* never using symmetrical forms regardless of familiarity or emotional closeness.

2. Address Terms in Extended Families

In extended family contexts, usage patterns were more varied but still aligned with the generational hierarchy. Younger Pn addressed older relatives such as aunts and uncles using kinship-based terms such as *Mak Ngah*, *Pak Long*, or *Mak Ucu* depending on the Pn's relation to the addressee and the ordinal position within the family. These forms were nonreciprocal and formal in nature.

Older relatives addressed younger members nieces, nephews, or grandchildren with more flexible terms, often using names, titles such as *adik* or *neng*, or sometimes affectionate forms. The usage remained nonreciprocal downward, reflecting an age-based hierarchy.

3. Address Among Peers and Siblings

Among siblings and cousins of similar age, the study revealed a reciprocal symmetrical pattern of address. Forms such as *Ikak* were used bilaterally and consistently across peer interactions. These terms were selected based on gender and birth order, with *abang* and *kak* for older siblings, and *adik* for younger ones. However, once age symmetry was established (e.g., among same-aged cousins), reciprocal address using similar terms or personal names was common and culturally acceptable.

Table 1. Patterns of Address Term Usage in Family Contexts

Relationship Type	Direction of Use	Address Term Type	Pattern
Older → Younger	Downward	Name or general reference (e.g., *adik*)	Nonreciprocal
Younger → Older	Upward	Kinship term (e.g., *abang, kakak*)	Nonreciprocal
Niece/Nephew→Uncle/Aunt	Upward	Kinship-based ordinal terms (e.g., *Mak Long*)	Nonreciprocal
Uncle/Aunt→Niece/Nephew	Downward	Name or general reference (e.g., *adik*)	Nonreciprocal
Sibling (peer age) ↔ Sibling	Equal	Gendered sibling term or name	Reciprocal
Cousin (peer age) ↔ Cousin	Equal	Name/neutral address form	Reciprocal

4. Situational Influence

Patterns were found to shift slightly depending on the level of formality. For example, in formal settings such as family gatherings or ceremonies, address terms tended to be more hierarchical and honorific, while in casual home contexts, Pn were more likely to use affectionate or playful variations. Nevertheless, the underlying pattern structured by age and kinship remained consistent across both settings.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that the use of address terms in the family environment of the Malay community in Marok Kecil Village follows clear, structured, and socially conditioned patterns, primarily shaped by age hierarchy, generational distance, and kinship roles. These findings are consistent with sociolinguistic expectations that address terms are not merely lexical choices but reflect underlying social structures and relational dynamics (Brown & Gilman,

(1960); Ervin-Tripp, (1972)). The consistent appearance of nonreciprocal patterns in interactions between different generations, and reciprocal patterns among peers, confirms that Malay Pn use language to encode both respect and relational proximity in systematic ways.

1. Term of Address to Upward
   a. *Abang*

   Based on data in speech obtained from family speech. Pn and Pt interactions take place in informal situations between siblings. The context of this interaction was when Pn spoke to Pt because he wanted to borrow his brother's motorbike.

   Pn : "***Bang***, aku nak pinjam honda boleh tak e?"
   Sp.Mm 1:T mau pinjam motor boleh tidak par?
   'Abang, apa boleh aku meminjam motor?'

   Pt : "Boleh je,   tapi balek isi minyak e."
   Boleh par, tetapi balik isi minyak par.
   'Boleh, tetapi isi minyak ya'

   (ALbT,23)
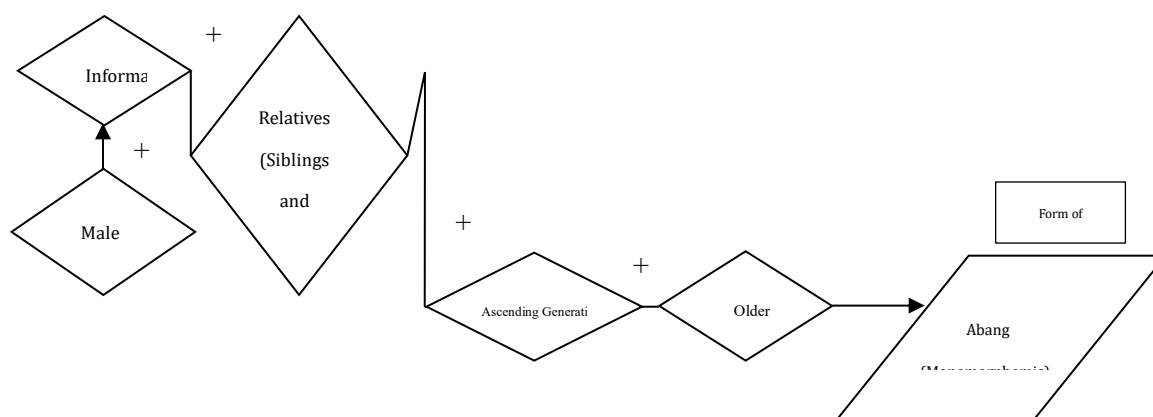
Based on the chart, Pn and Pt share a familial relationship as biological siblings, specifically that of a younger sister (Pn) and her older brother (Pt). Pt is male. The speech context is informal, as indicated by the potential use of discourse particles such as e and je, which are commonly found in everyday informal interactions. Pt, as a relative of Pn, belongs to an older generation and is older in age compared to Pn. Within this context, the kinship term employed is Abang. This term is selected based on the social and familial relationship between Pn and Pt.

Abang is a kinship address term used to refer to an older biological brother or a male family member with a close relational tie. Structurally, *Abang* is a monomorphemic form. Its usage adheres to specific sociolinguistic patterns: it is directed toward an elder male sibling, employed within familial or intimate social contexts involving older individuals, and conveys a degree of respect while

maintaining an informal tone. The term *Abang* is primarily used within the nuclear family domain, signifying intimacy and familial closeness among its members.

2. Term of Address to Downward
   a. *Mak Ngah*

   In the data in the speech obtained from family speech. The speech of Pn and Pt took place in an informal situation between the nephew and the mother's older sister, in KBBI known as Aunt. The context of the speech was when Pn spoke with Pt at a simple coffee shop in the morning.

   Pn : "***Mak Ngah***, kak nak kopi susu ngan pisang goreng e."
        Sp.Pm , 1:T mau kopi susu prep pisang goreng par.

        'Mak Ngah, kakak mau kopi susu dengan pisang goreng ya.'

   Pt : "Aoklah, sebenta   e."
        Iya-par, sebentar par.

        'Baiklah, sebentar ya.'

   (BPbT,6)
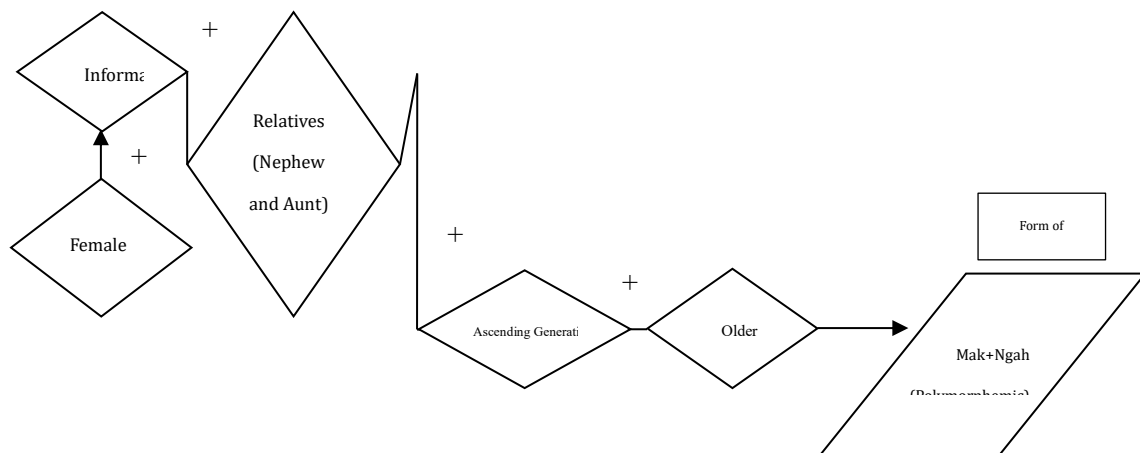
Based on the chart, Pn and Pt share a kinship relationship in which Pn is the niece and Pt is the elder sister of Pn's mother. Pt is female. The speech situation is informal, as marked by the use of discourse particles such as e and lah. Pt is a relative from an older generation and is older in age than Pn. Within this context, the kinship term employed is Mak Ngah. This term is selected based on the social relationship between Pn and Pt. Mak Ngah is a common term of address in Malay culture for an older female relative.

The form of address *Mak Ngah* consists of two morphemes: *Mak* and *Ngah*. *Mak* is a free morpheme meaning "mother" in Malay, while *Ngah* is a bound morpheme derived from the word *Tengah*, meaning "middle." The morpheme *Ngah*

undergoes the process of apheresis, where the initial phoneme is omitted in this case, the phoneme *Te-* from *Tengah* resulting in the form *Ngah*. In Malay cultural tradition, *Ngah* refers to the second-born or the middle child in a family. When combined, *Mak Ngah* becomes a specific term of address that not only denotes familial relation but also conveys additional information regarding the addressee's position or status within the family structure (specifically, the older second-born daughter). According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI), *Mak Ngah* corresponds to the term *Tante*.

This form of address is used in particular contexts and follows specific usage patterns: it is directed toward an older female, typically within the framework of kinship or close relationships with elders; it conveys respect while still being appropriate in casual or informal settings. Notably, this address term is used to refer to extended family members, specifically the mother's siblings, and thus is not employed for members of the nuclear family (i.e., father, mother, and siblings).

3. Term of Address to Equal
   a. *Ikak*

   The data is derived from everyday conversational speech. The relationship between Pn and Pt is that of cousins of the same age or peer group. The interaction takes place in an informal setting. The context of the interaction occurs when Pn inquiries about Pt's university and field of study.

   Pn   :   "***Ikak*** kat mane e kuliah? Jurusan ape? Lupe lah aku."
               Sp.Mm prep mana par kuliah? Jurusan apa?   Lupa par 1:T.

               'Ikak dimana ya kuliah? Jurusan apa? Aku lupa.'
   Pt   :   "Kat Gorontalo, ambek kedokteran."
               Prep adv, ambil kedokteran.

(AKbS,25)
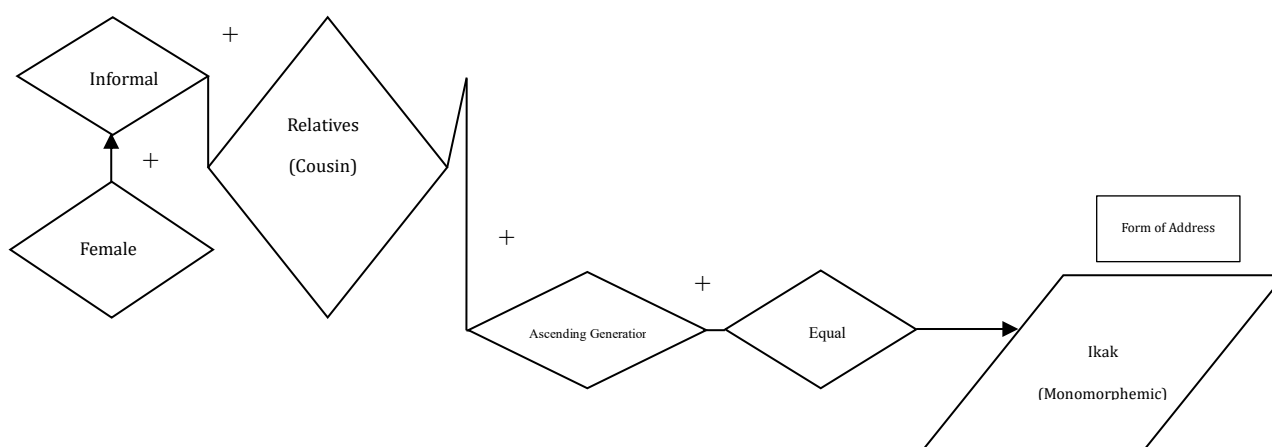
Based on the chart, Pn and Pt share a close social distance due to their familial relationship as cousins of the same age. Pt is female. The speech situation is informal, as indicated by the use of discourse particles such as e and lah. Pt is a relative of Pn who does not belong to an older generation and is of the same age. Within this context, the kinship term that emerges is Ikak. This address term is selected based on the social relationship between Pn and Pt. Ikak is a common form of address in Malay culture used for individuals of the same age or peer group.

The form of address Ikak consists of a single morpheme. It is used in specific situations with the following usage pattern: it is directed toward cousins of the same age, employed within the context of kinship or close interpersonal relationships among peers, and expresses politeness while still being appropriate in a casual or informal setting. This term is used to address family members who are not part of the nuclear family (i.e., father, mother, and siblings), as it is specifically used for cousins.

First, the dominance of nonreciprocal upward and downward patterns in nuclear and extended families aligns with Ervin-Tripp's (1972) alternation rule, which suggests that Pn select address forms based on the relative social status or role of the interlocutor. In this context, younger Pn use formal kinship terms such as *ayah*, *ibu*, or *mak ngah* to indicate respect and deference to older relatives. Conversely, older Pn tend to use more flexible or affectionate terms for younger family members, including names, birth-order-based nicknames (*adik*, *usu*, etc.), or diminutives. This confirms the theoretical expectation that address choices function as linguistic tools to manage power and solidarity within social interactions.

Second, the study supports the concept of co-occurrence proposed by Ervin-Tripp (1972), which posits that address terms are chosen in coordination with situational features such as the formality of the setting, role relationships, and communication goals. Although formality influenced the tone and style of address terms, it did not fundamentally alter the core patterns of usage, which remained stable across contexts. This suggests that address term usage in the Riau Malay family setting is highly conventionalized and governed more by relational logic than by situational spontaneity.

Third, the presence of reciprocal address patterns among peers particularly siblings or cousins of the same age group further reinforces the role of social symmetry in shaping linguistic behavior. The mutual use of terms like ikak, abang, or direct personal names illustrates the principle of equality in symmetrical relationships. Such patterns demonstrate solidarity, familiarity, and mutual recognition, which Brown and Ford (1972) have associated with peer-level interactions in many cultural settings.

When compared with previous studies, the results of this research both affirm and refine existing understandings. Studies such as those by Wibowo and

Retnaningsih (2015) and Didi (2016) highlighted a range of address forms and their connection to cultural identity and politeness norms, but often lacked detailed descriptions of usage patterns in real-time interaction. This study extends the discourse by showing how and when these terms are applied, providing a fine-grained map of pragmatic patterns within the family domain. Furthermore, while Novendra et al. (2017) emphasized the function of address terms in maintaining politeness in Minangkabau culture, the current findings suggest a similar function in Riau Malay culture, but with greater emphasis on hierarchical clarity and birth-order differentiation, such as the use of *A long*, *Angah*, or *Usu*, which was not previously detailed in other ethnic contexts.

In contrast to the findings of Afsari (2023), who observed linguistic innovation and relaxed address norms among urban youth in Bandung, this study reveals a more conservative and stable pattern of address term usage within the rural Malay context. The linguistic behavior observed in Marok Kecil reflects an adherence to traditional social values, where address terms serve as ritualized markers of respect, kinship, and social structure, with limited evidence of variation or innovation among younger Pn.

In summary, the study demonstrates that the use of address terms in Riau Malay families is deeply structured and socially meaningful. The findings support core sociolinguistic theories regarding language and social relations, particularly those related to asymmetrical power dynamics and symmetrical solidarity. The research offers a distinctive contribution by shifting the focus from lexical classification to the functional patterns of address term usage, thus deepening our understanding of how language behaviour operates within familial microsystems in traditional Malay society.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that the use of address terms within the Malay families of Marok Kecil Village in the Riau Islands follows identifiable and consistent patterns of usage that are deeply rooted in social hierarchy, age, and kinship structure. The findings confirm that address terms are not selected arbitrarily; rather, they are governed by sociolinguistic rules that reflect relational dynamics between Pn. Specifically, nonreciprocal patterns dominate in interactions between generations where younger family members use formal and respectful kinship-based terms toward elders, while elders employ affectionate or flexible address terms toward the young. Reciprocal patterns, on the other hand, are prevalent among siblings and peers of similar age, indicating social symmetry and mutual familiarity.

By focusing not on the lexical forms themselves but on their usage patterns, this research advances our understanding of how language functions as a tool for maintaining social order and expressing relational roles in traditional family contexts. It supports and extends prior theories by providing micro-level evidence

of Ervin-Tripp's alternation and co-occurrence principles in real-life, culturally embedded interactions. Furthermore, the study contributes to the documentation of local Malay sociolinguistic practices, particularly in a region where oral traditions remain strong but are increasingly vulnerable to cultural shifts and language contact.

Nevertheless, this study is not without limitations. The research focused exclusively on one village community, with a relatively homogenous cultural profile and strong traditional norms. As such, the patterns observed may not fully represent variations that might exist in more urban, mixed, or modernized Malay-speaking families. Additionally, the study relied primarily on qualitative data, without statistical generalization across broader populations. While this allows for depth of analysis, it limits the scope for wider generalizability.

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several recommendations are proposed for future research. First, comparative studies across different Malay-speaking communities especially urban and diasporic groups would offer valuable insight into how modernization, education, or interethnic contact may influence or modify address term usage patterns.

Second, longitudinal studies observing potential generational shifts in address term behaviour over time would help in understanding whether the observed patterns are stable or susceptible to change. Finally, further research that combines qualitative observation with quantitative methods could provide a more comprehensive model for analysing sociolinguistic patterns in family discourse.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing body of sociolinguistic research by highlighting the patterned and socially regulated use of address terms in family interactions. It reaffirms the significance of language in constructing social identity and relational positioning, particularly in culturally rich and tradition-bound communities such as the Malay society of the Riau Islands.

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