

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Human beings are social creatures. They need to interact with one another through language. Language is needed in interaction; however, language is not the only means to make good interaction. In our daily interaction, politeness is an important thing. Sometimes, we take politeness for granted. In order to be polite, we may think that we just need to say 'please' or 'thanks'. Actually, politeness is a complicated business in any language because if we want to be polite, we have to know about the sociocultural aspects of the community. There are many differences of the sociocultural aspects in each community. So, politeness is hard to learn. (Holmes, 1994:267)

One way to show politeness is the use of address terms. Communities in the world have different ways in addressing someone. One person usually has more than one address term. For example, a person can be called by the first name (FN), last name (LN), title + last name (TLN), nickname (NN) and terms of endearment, like 'honey', 'sweetheart', 'dear', etc.

Through address terms, we can know about someone's social status, the speaker's feeling, the relationship between the speaker and the person addressed, whether the situation formal or informal. For example, a subordinate addresses his or her superior with the TLN. A mother always addresses her son with the FN or nickname, but when she is angry with him, she may address him with his full name. A student addresses his headmaster with TLN at school, but when they have a closer relationship and they are not in a formal setting, the student may call the headmaster with the FN.

The subject of my research is the play *MULLATO A Tragedy of the Deep South*. This play is an interesting story with the background of slavery in the South America in 1930s. In this story there are many violations in using address terms. It tells about a rich man, Colonel Thomas Norwood, in Georgia in 1930s. He is a white plantation owner who has many black slaves. One of his slaves becomes his mistress after his wife dies. The mistress gives him four children. This is the root of all the complicated problems in the play, which is clearly reflected in the address terms used.

There were enormous farms or plantations in South America, and Georgia was one of them. Commonly, the owners of the plantations were white people while the black people worked to grow cotton in Georgia. Black people were still regarded as slaves in Georgia although legally they had gained their freedom after the Civil War in 1861 to 1865. In Georgia, there was a strong racial discrimination between the black and white people. In 1954 until 1968, there was an African-American civil rights movement which aimed to eliminate racial discrimination and got the equality status particularly in the South such as Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama and Virginia.

([http://encarta.msn.com/text_7615716090/ Georgia \(state\). Html](http://encarta.msn.com/text_7615716090/Georgia_(state).html) African-American Civil Rights Movement (1955-1968)

I notice that there are violations in terms of address terms used in this play and these violations reflect the situation and condition of slavery in America at that time. That is why I am personally interested in discussing further the violations of address terms in Langston Hughes' play *MULATTO A Tragedy of the Deep South* for my thesis. In my opinion the use of address terms in this play is very significant as it can reflect the social condition of America during the slavery period. I would like to explain the violations in terms of the social factors related to them.

The linguistic area of my topic is Sociolinguistics, which studies the relationship between language and society". (Holmes, 1994:1) I believe it is a suitable theory to explain the violations that occur in this play because the violation of address terms has a close relationship with social factors, such as participants, setting, topic and purpose; moreover, I would like to make people more aware of the use of address terms. They need to know first the social factors before selecting the address terms to use. Otherwise, it will be difficult for them to make good interactions with one another.

Statement of the Problem

In this thesis, I would like to make a research on:

1. What are the violations of address terms used in Langston Hughes' play *MULATTO A Tragedy of the Deep South*?
2. How are the violations related to politeness strategy?
3. How are the four factors related to the violations?

Purpose of the Study

By doing the research, I intend:

1. To know the violations of address terms used in Langston Hughes' play *MULATTO A Tragedy of the Deep South*.
2. To know the violations related to politeness strategy.
3. To know the social factors that is related to each violation of address terms.

Methods of Research

First, I read the play and collect all the address terms used. Second, I select the data, which have violated of the address term used. Third, I classify the data based on the factors related to the violations. Finally, I analyze the data and write a research report.

Organization of the Thesis

My thesis consists of four chapters. Chapter One is the Introduction, which contains the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two is Theoretical Framework, which deals with the explanation of the linguistic area and the approaches used in my thesis. Chapter Three presents the discussion on the violations of address terms in Langston Hughes' play *MULLATO A Tragedy of the Deep South*. And the last chapter, Chapter Four, is the Conclusion, in which I write my personal comments and opinions of the findings. The thesis ends with the Bibliography and Appendices.