

The Realization of Address terms in Sorani Kurdish (Jafi Dialect)

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Abstract: *The use of terms of address is usually influenced by factors such as "age, sex, occupation, ideology, political and social position of the interlocutors" (Asadpour et.al. 2012). In the recent decades address terms in different languages have been studied from different perspectives. In line with those studies this article focuses on identifying different types of addressing terms that Jaf interlocutors may use in different contexts. Jafi is a dialect of Sorani Kurdish spoken in some parts of Kermanshah province including the towns of Javanroud, Ravansar and some villages around Sarpole Zahab and Paveh. Personal names, general and occupation titles, kinship related terms, religious oriented expressions, honorifics, terms of intimacy, personal pronouns, descriptive phrases and employing greetings or attention getters to avoid address terms are discussed. Emphasis is on the discussion of the type of terms of address that Jaf people in Kermanshah utilize in the contexts in which they are engaged. The circumstances under which they are created are considered. It is argued in this article that the speaker and the addressee's social relationship, and the context of the communicative event are the main factors determining the choice of address variants. The choices are considered as reflection of very broad classes of social meaning. The findings of this study could be used in teaching Jafi, pragmatics and translation focusing on address terms*

Keywords: *address terms, Jafs, Jafi dialect, honorifics, kinship related terms.*

Introduction

Social relationships between people are among the most important factors influencing the patterns of addressing in every communicative event. People use various techniques to open, maintain, or close conversations. It is interesting and of course useful to Study patterns of addressing in a given language in order to know the related culture.

To Afful (2006a) "terms of address constitute an important part of verbal behavior through which the behavior, norms and practices of a society can be identified" (p.23). Mashiri(1999) claims that,

Addressing practices are dynamic and they reflect linguistic, political and cultural changes and the changes and continuities in the way human relationships and identities are perceived and the factors that determine them. Contemporary sociolinguistics is concerned with establishing the connection between language and culture.(p.93)

Wardhaugh (2006) found out that various social factors influence our choices of terms. Some of these are the special occasion, the social status of the interlocutors, transactional status, such as a lawyer-client relationship, sex, age, race, intimacy, and family relationships.

People are usually addressed and referred to by their ordinary personal names, nicknames and sometimes by other special names. Halliday (1978) distinguished three main functions for language: ideational, textual and interpersonal. The interpersonal function is indicating and establishing social relationships between people in a society; it includes terms of address, speech functions, etc. Fasold (1990) believes that in no area of sociolinguistics this function of language is more highlighted than in address forms. In addition, the address system reflects cultural norms and values. For example, if in a language a number of variants in the address system refer to religious terms it shows the important status of religion in the respective culture (Braun, as cited in Asadpour et. al., 2012).

The Sorani Kurdish is a language spoken in many areas around the world especially in four countries, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Syria. The variants of Sorani that today most of them are considered as dialects of Sorani are listed below.

- Mukriyani is spoken in south of Lake Urmia with Mahabad as its center, including the cities of Piranshahr, Bokeran, Sardasht, Oshnavieh and the Kurdish speaking parts of Naghadeh and Miandoab. This region is traditionally known as Mukriyan.
- Ardalani is spoken in the cities of Sanandaj, Marivan, Kamyaran, Divandarreh, Ghorveh and Dehgolan in Kurdistan province and the Kurdish speaking parts of Tekab and Shahindej in West Azerbaijan province. This region is known as Ardalan.
- Garmiani is spoken in and around Kirkuk.
- Hawleri is spoken in and around the city of Hawler (Erbil) in Iraqi Kurdistan. Its main distinction is changing the consonant /l/ into /r/ in many words.
- Babani is spoken in and around the city of Sulaymaniya in Iraq and the cities of Saghez and Baneh in Iran.
- Jafi, spoken in the towns of Javanroud, Ravansar and some villages around Sarpole Zahab and Paveh.

A recent proposal was made for Sorani to be the official language of the Kurdistan Regional Government. This idea has been favored by some Sorani-speaking Kurds but it has disappointed Kurmanjis.

Jafi is spoken in the towns of Javanroud, Ravansar and some villages around Sarpole Zahab and Paveh. It can be said that Jafi is more easily understandable to speakers of Persian in comparison with other dialects of Sorani Kurdish, and it is mostly used as lingua franca between Jaf and Hawrami interlocutors. Hawrami is among the major dialects of Kurdish, mostly spoken in Horaman in western Iran (Iranian Kurdistan) and northeastern Iraq (Iraqi Kurdistan). The key cities of this region are Paveh in Iran and Halabja in Iraq.

Regarding the grammatical structure in Jafi there are no pronouns to distinguish between masculine and feminine and no verb inflection to signal gender. Because of lack of systematic investigation of the pragmatics in general and the use of address terms in Jafi dialect of Sorani, this research intended to explore and identify address terms to uncover the associated role relationships and cognitive and social meaning expressed by Jaf interlocutors.

Review of the Related Literature

Keshavarz (1988) studied the forms of address in post-revolutionary Iran. In search for the political function of address terms, he reported that the revolution in Iran resulted in the choice of address terms indicating solidarity and the need to express solidarity led to greater use of terms like 'brother' and 'sister'.

Saberi (2002, p. 23, as cited in Asadpour et al., 2012) studied the understanding level of non-Farsi speakers of the social functions of Persian address terms as a second language. He administered a self-made questionnaire to 30 Tehrani senior university students studying at Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran, and 30 foreign students studying Persian as a second language at Qazvin International University, Qazvin, Iran. The foreign students were all Arabs and from countries such as Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Sudan. Using a t-test, he discovered that non-Farsi speakers had a low understanding of the social functions of Persian address terms. He also found that Persian has a complicated address system that includes pronouns, names, titles, KTs, endearment terms, reproof terms and zero forms. Saberi's (2002) case demonstrates that in learning any foreign language the social behavior of the target culture is of more significance than just learning the vocabulary and grammar of that language.

Afful (2006a) noted that studies in socio-linguistics used to be limited to domestic or familial settings. He also stated that "more recently, studies of address terms (sometimes aided by discourse analysis) are beginning to make forays into other social processes and practices such as politics and religion suggesting the vitality of address terms" (p.276) He claimed that the influence of Westernism and modernism was reflected in the use of personal names and catch

phrases. "With differing levels of frequency and saliency, the use of these terms was dictated by sociocultural factors such as gender, status, age and relationship of interactants as well as pragmatic factors" (p.276). He further asserts that the findings of address term studies have implications for theory, intercultural communication and further research.

Aliakabari and Toni (2008) in their study focused on identifying different types of addressing terminology that Persian interlocutors may use in different contexts. Their study in their own words revealed that,

Persian language is rich enough in this respect and that an artful skill is required for Persian speakers to make an accurate and proper use of the vast range of choices for addressing individuals in various contexts. In addition to account for the abandonment of certain socioeconomic-referenced terms, the study also shows a number of culture-specific address terms which may have no equivalent in English. (p. 3)

Asadpour et al.'s, (2012) study aimed at ascertaining and formulating a framework that would account for the Kurdish data. They scrutinized all the dyads that occurred in the selected corpus, and described how they usually work on the basis of the two variables: power and intimacy. In their investigation they found out that the use of terms of address in Kurdish is affected by the age, sex, occupation, ideology, political and social position of the interlocutors which can be stated as a result of the investigation of older material –such as qualitative analysis of observation followed by unobtrusive note taking of contemporary use, a corpus of several plays, accounts of travel, interviews, TV, radio and the careful observation of the use of terms of address of today. They reported that cognitively, Kurdish tends toward a holistic style and it puts the group, family, and country before the individual.

Method

Classification Scheme

Following Aliakbari and Toni (2008) this study adopted ten categories of address terms including: personal names, titles, religious-oriented terms, occupation-bound terms, kinship or family/relative terms, honorifics and terms of formality, terms of intimacy, personal pronouns, descriptive phrases, and zero address terms.

Procedure

In this study, attempts were made to present and explain the linguistic resources available to Jaf addressers. In doing so, we extracted and categorized the range of address terms which Jaf interlocutors in Kermanshah use in different circumstances. Deliberate attention was also paid to ensure the exploration of the common address terms used by speakers in various ranges of age as well as different occupations.

Personal Names

In Jafi addressing a person by personal names may happen in the following forms.

1. By first name (FN), e. g., Rebwaar;
2. By last name (LN), e.g., Weisi;
3. By full name (FLN), e. g, Rebwaar Weisi.

As noted, first, last and full names are commonly used but not middle names. This is the common practice, but there also cases where people use one's father's name as last name following the first names. Actually this case is the most prevalent practice in Sorani Kurdish areas in Kurdistan, Iraq. However it has recently been more popular with Jaf speakers in Kermanshah to identify people by their father's and sometimes mother's names. We can argue that the use of last names has been introduced into Kurdish language under the influence of Persian culture and language.

For addressing people two popular terms are used as titles preceding first names to show respect and sincerity. They are '**kaak**' (elder brother)for males and '**daada**' (elder sister) for females e.g., '**kaak Ako**' and '**daada Aso**'. With old men speakers may use '**maamo**' or '**khaalo**'(uncle) and '**mimmi**' or '**mim**' (aunt) with old women before their first names in informal situations, such as:

khaalo Ahmay, mammo Haatan, mim Soyba, or mimi Zibana

In formal settings like schools and offices people usually address each other by titles **aagha** (Mr.) and **khanem** (Ms.) before last names like **aaghay Mahmoodi** and **khanem Ahmadi**.

Title Names

Titles are terms used before and sometimes after names usually indicating person's gender, age, and personal relationships. The following are some gender-specific titles that Jaf speakers use in their forms of addressing:

For Males

- General title (GT), e.g., **khaalo** (uncle), **maamo** (uncle), for addressing old and **kaaka** (elder brother) young people.
- GT plus FN, e.g., **khaalo Hasan, maamo Johar, kaaka Rawand**.
- GT plus LN, e.g., **aaghay** (Mr.) **Razaei** in very formal settings like office or school.
- GT plus FLN, e.g., **aaghay**(Mr.) **Mirzaa Sedighi** (this case is very rare, except for really formal situations).

For Females

- GT, e.g., **khaanem** (Ms.), **daada**(elder sister), **khoyshkakam**(my sister), **mimi**(aunt), and **daaykakam**(my mother).
- GT plus FN, e.g., **Parnian khaanem** , **daada Rozhin**, **khoyshka Soraya**, **mim or mimi Kobra**, **daayka Kale**
- GT plus LN, e.g., **khaanem Rostami**.
- GT plus FLN, e.g., **khaanem Gona Aini**.

It deserves notice that most of the times titles like **maamo** and **khaalo** for males and **mimi** and **daaykakam** for females are used with old people and titles like **kaaka** for males and **daada** for females for young ones. So we can argue that they are also age-specific titles.

Religious Address Terms

Religious address terms in Kurdish are not special to any dialects and are common to all. They are:

- **Haaji** refers to pilgrimage of the holy shrine, Kaaba in Mecca. For females the related address term is **haajizhen**. **Zhen** means woman in Sorani Kurdish. These two address terms can be used in isolation or in combination with first names, e.g., **haji Mesafaa**, and **hajizhen Aynaa**. But some people use haji with women too, e.g., **haaji Aynaa**.
- **Sayed** or **say** is the male descendent of the holy prophet, Mohammah(PBUH). In isolation the terms **sayed** is usually used. But preceding the first name **say** is more commonly used. If someone is both **haaji** and **sayed**, he will be called like **haaji say Latif**.
- **Shekh** is another term used for very religious man. It can be used in isolation or before first names, e.g., **shekh Hadi**. It can also be preceded by the term **haaji**, e.g., **haaji shekh sedigh**.
- **Khalifa**(caliph) is also among religious terms used in Kurdish and can be used in isolation, followed by first names or preceded by the address term **haaji**, e.g., **haaji khalife Ali**.
- **Mala** or **maamosaa** is a religiously literate man. This term is used in the same way,e.g., **malaa Anwar** or **maamosa Ali**. And,
- **Darwish**, e.g. **darwish Farogh**.

These religious terms except **haaji** are unique to men, so to address these people's wives in SK, speakers add **zhen** to the term,e.g., **khalifazhen**. We have to note that none of these terms have exact equivalents in English.

Occupation-Bound Terms

Occupation-bound terms are also used in Jafi address system. Address terms which refer to particular jobs or careers are probably as many as the occupations themselves. One can address his or her recipient by:

– Only Job Title (JT), like

- **hosaa** or **wesaa** (craftsman)
- **doctor** (doctor)
- **mohandes** (engineer)
- **raawchi** (hunter)
- **shwaan** (shepherd)
- **raais** (boss)

– A combination of GT and JT, like

- **khanem doctor** (Ms. doctor)
- **aaghay raiis** (Mr. boss)
- **wesaa Jamshir** (artisan Jamshir)
- **Hama shwaan** (Hama shepherd)

– A combination of JT and LN, like

- **mohandes Khorrami** (engineer Khorrami)
- **doctor Sedighi** (Dr. Sedighi)

– A combination of GT, JT and LN, like

- **aaghay doktor Razaei** (Mr. doctor Razaei)
- **khaanem mohandes Saeedi** (Ms. engineer Saeedi)

– A combination of GT, JT, and FLN, like,

- **aaghay doctor Siroos Razaei** (Mr. doctor Siroos Razaei)
- **khaanem mohandes Serwa Saeedi** (Ms. engineer Serwa Saeedi)

As you may note occupations that need literacy and university degrees like medicine and engineering are used differently in the Jafi addressing system in comparison with other jobs like a craftsman or shepherd. These job titles are usually followed and sometimes preceded by the first name.

One who considers oneself of higher social or occupational position to the addressee uses terms that show this difference by calling him/her with just the first name.

Kinship or Family/Relative Terms

According to Braun(1988) “Kinship terms are terms for blood relations and for affines” (p.9). Jafi address terms show the strong family relationships. One may call his/her:

Father as: **baaba, bawka, or baw;**

Mother as: **daayka, daay, or daaya;**

✓ Elder brother as: **kak or kaaka;**

Brother as: **braa;**

Sister as: **khoshk, or khoyshk;**

✓ Elder sister as: **daada, aabaaji, baaji, or taati;**

Sister-in-law as: **braazhen;**

✓ Grandfather as: **baawaa;**

✓ Grandmother as: **daayaa;**

✓ Mother's brother (uncle) as: **khaalo**, his wife (aunt) as: **khaalozhen,**

and their child (cousin) as: **khaalozaa;**

✓ Father's brother (uncle) as: **maamo**, his wife (aunt) as: **maamozhen,**

and their child (cousin) as: **aamozaa;**

✓ Father's as well as mother's sister (aunt) as: **mim, mimi, de, or deya,**

and her child (cousin) as: **mimzaa or dezaa;**

Brother's child (niece and nephew) as: **braazaa;**

Sister's child (niece and nephew) as: **khoshkazaa or khoyshkazaa;**

Wife as: **zhenaka;**

Husband as: **piaawaka, or piaayaka;**

Child as: **rola** (child);

Baby as: **korpa, or korpakam** (my little baby);

Son as: **korakam** (my son);

Daughter as: **kanishkakam or kechakam** (my daughter);

Daughter-in-law or son's wife as: **bouk or wawi** (bride);

Son-in-law or daughter's husband as: **zawa** (groom).

We have to note that the marked address terms can be used in isolation or followed by the person's first name, e.g., **mamo Faayagh, mim Marzia, braazhen Asrin**. There is no gender distinction in address terms utilized for cousins and also for niece and nephew.

An interesting fact is that Sorani Kurdish people usually use the term **gyaan** (dear, literally meaning life) after first names or kinship terms, e.g., **Gona gyaan , maamo gyaan**.

Another interesting thing is the fact that at times addressers use their own address titles in addressing the addressee. The following example clarifies this reverse addressing possibility:

Baaba gyan, lewaane aawem bo teri? (Dear daddy, would you fetch me a glass of water?)

And finally it is interesting to address strangers as if they are calling a family member or a relative. Some examples are as follows:

Kaaka gyaan, khalki konay? (Dear elder brother, where are you from?)

Mimi gyaan men lera kas naanaasem. (Dear aunt, I don't know anyone here.)

Honorifics or Terms of Formality

Honorifics are expressions showing politeness or formality. They show respect, modesty or indicate that the speaker is at a rank lower than that of the addressee. These "appositional expressions, which could be used in order to honor or dignify the addressed person" (Aliakbari & Toni, 2008) are used in almost every language.

Jafi speakers use terms like **ghorbaan** and **janaabaali** always in isolation and **janaab** in the following ways:

- In isolation
- Plus GT plus last names, e.g., **janaab aaghay Gholami**
- Plus GT plus full names, e.g., **janaab aaghay Rasool Ardalan**
- Plus GT plus JT, e.g., **janaab aaghay doktor**
- Plus GT plus JT plus full names, e.g., **janaab aaghay mohandes Weria Bahrami**

The above terms are actually loan words and we don't think they belong to Kurdish. In SK there are terms like **rezdar**(respected or honorable), **barez**(respected or honorable) before first names as well as full names; but they are rarely used in these Jafi speaking areas.

Terms of Intimacy

According to Aliakbari and Toni (2008),

There are Situations where intimate colleagues address partners with more friendly and more amiable tone. By intimacy we refer to situations where the speaker treats the

listener as a member of an in-group, a friend or a person whose wants and personality traits are known and liked. (p. 9)

So Jaf speakers use terms of intimacy like this:

- Nicknames, e.g., **Fara** or **Fara gyaan** for Farida;
- Abbreviated first name, e.g., **Hama** for Mohammmd;
- Pet names, e.g., **nazarakam** (my darling), **delakam** (my heart), **chawakam** (my eye), **rohakam** (my soul), **amrakam** (my life), **azizakam** (my dear), **khoshawisakam** (my beloved), **golakam** (my flower).

As we mentioned earlier the term **gyaan** (dear or life) in Kurdish is frequently used after first names or nicknames indicating intimacy and love of the speaker toward the hearer.

Parents address their babies using pet names as well as terms like **barkhakam** (my lamb), **korpakam** (my little baby), **shirinakam** (my sweet), **rola gyan** (my dear kid).

In using nicknames and pet names "age, status and degree of intimacy are highly observed" (Aliakbari & Toni, 2008). For example Grandparentms and parents usually call children by nicknames or pet names.

Personal Pronouns

There exist two second person pronouns in Jafi. **To** (you) is singular and **ewa** (you) is plural. When they are going to express great respect, Jaf speakers use **ewa** (plural you) or the term **janaabtan** (your Excellency) and a plural verb with a single addressee. Example:

A student to her professor,

"Dr. Ahmadi, janaabtaan kay emtahaanmaan le agren?"

Dr. Ahmadi, when does your Excellency give us a test?

This case is also true for third person. That is, there are two pronouns for third person, **aw** (he/she) and **awaan** (they); but a third person plural pronoun and plural verb may be used to refer to a single person to indicate a respectable person. Example:

Student A: **Dr. Rezaee anaasi?**

Do you know Dr. Rezaee?

Student B: **Dr. Rezaee? Ay chon! Awaan(they) ostaadmanen(are our professor).**

Dr. Rezaee? Of course! He is our professor.

Descriptive Phrases

There are also some descriptive phrases that speakers use to address others. Here are some examples:

kora jwaankhaasakam, (my handsome son); **naazaar delakam** (darling of my heart); **aaghay aziz** (dear sir); **kanishka shirinakm** (my sweet daughter).

Zero Address Terms

Zero address terms are terms or expressions which the addresser actually use for attention getting or greetings or as Aliakbari and Toni indicate when one" is in doubt as to how address people s/he can actually avoid the difficulty by not using any term. Instead s/he may use attention getters or greetings."(p.10)

Example:

Bwakhsha (excuse me), **bwakhshen** (excuse me), **slam** (hello), **choni?** (How are you?)

Discussion and conclusion

The patterns emerged from data analysis evidenced that Jaaf speakers have really been influenced by their surroundings, especially by Persians. In recent years people have brought some Persian terms into their speech which might be the result of having to speak Persian at school and in offices and also listening to the news and watching TV in Persian plus a lot of other sources of exposure to Persian language.

"The Sorani Kuedish system of address is rooted in social structure that gives great importance to the kinship system" (Asadpour et. al., 2012, p. 447). This system has been of such significance that speakers use kinship terms even with strangers. Sorani Kurdish people utilize a wide variety of address terms in expressing different shades of social meaning.

As can be noted the realization of address terms in Sorani Kurdish and here in this special case Jafi dialect suggest some kind of intimacy and kindness of Kurds. Kurds are sincere and use kind terms like **gyaan** very often when addressing friends, relatives and even strangers. Evidence indicating intimacy and affection of Kurdish people is the address inversion terms. Findings of this study support Brown and Ford's claim (1961) that address usage "is not predictable from properties of the addressee alone and not predictable from properties of the speaker alone but only from properties of the dyad" (p.375).

An important implication of the findings of this study is that they provide an understanding of the address terms used by Jaf interlocutors as a way of fostering effective intercultural communication of Jaf speakers with speakers of other languages. Another implication is that the results of this research help speakers of other languages and dialects to communicate better with

Jaf speakers. As Parkinson (1985) noted that “knowledge of the proper use of terms of address is, therefore, as important to the overall success of a communication as knowledge of the conjugation of verbs would be” (p.225). One person can be addressed through different terms of address from different speakers and sometimes to be addressed differently from the same speakers depending on the particular context.

As the limitation of this study it should be mentioned that analyzing comprehensive corpus of different genres would certainly yield safer conclusions. Due to the limits for writing of an article, we sufficed to present typical examples for each category. Further research is required to study the conditions under which various categories are used. Determining the factors influencing the use of certain terms and explaining the reasons for selecting one or the other can be investigated through further research and studies. This study can be used as a guideline for teaching Kurdish learners and also be a useful contribution to translation in this area. We hope that our study or other investigations will shed more light on this subject.

Further research can be conducted to provide a more complete picture of the extent to which many variables affect address term usage to see which factors are more influential among others. It will be worthwhile in the future to examine and compare Jafi dialect's address terms with those of other dialects of Kurdish as well as with Persian.

The findings of such research would help foster cultural communication. Such a study may also have important implications for pragmatics and translation from English into Kurdish and vice versa. In addition to the analysis done in this study, the frequency of the different categories of terms of address should be obtained, it would be helpful in future research to conduct a statistical analysis to capture the interrelationships between the different variables and usage of address terms and to offer statistical analysis of the data in a way to see which factors are more statistically significant for the choice of a certain address term in what conditions.

In second language learning and teaching it is necessary to know that linguistic knowledge of the target language is not enough. As Cook (1990) points out, "the language learner needs to be able to handle language which is not idealized, rather language in use" (p.11). Teaching learners mere linguistic knowledge would not guarantee that they would be able to communicate appropriately in different situations. Terms of address are hard to translate and literal translation could lead to a loss in meaning. The findings of such studies could be useful in translator training and translation courses at universities.

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