

**A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF ADDRESS TERMS  
UTTERED BY THE CHARACTERS IN JAMES MARSH'S  
*THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING* MOVIE**

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**Abstract**

In this research address terms uttered by the characters in *The Theory of Everything* movie are analyzed using sociolinguistic approach. This research has two objectives; to identify the types of address terms which are uttered by the characters in the movie and to analyze the social factors that affect the characters in the movie in certain types of address terms. This research employed descriptive qualitative method. The results of this research are as follows. First, there are seven types of address terms. However, only five are used by the characters of the movie. They are first name, title with last name, title only, special name, kinship term. Second, there are nine social factors in this research. However, only five social factors are used by the characters. They are particular occasion, social status, age, family relationship, and degree of intimacy.

**Keywords:** sociolinguistic, address terms, *The Theory of Everything* movie

**INTRODUCTION**

Language is one of the important aspects in human life. Language cannot be separated from human life since it is a means of a communication. According to Pearson (1985: 14), communication can be counted as a medium of interaction which people can use when they want to negotiate a certain meaning of any

matter. A successful communication only can be reached when the information in the messages can be understood by both speaker and hearer. Meanwhile, the failure of a communication becomes a flaw in society, since communication is significant to satisfy individual, social, and also practical needs.

To make an effective communication, people should understand the use of address terms. Address terms is known as the way people call or address the addressee. The speaker uses address terms to call the person involved in the conversation. The use of address terms depends on the addresser and addressee's relationship, the social status or individual involve in the conversation, the situation and purpose of the conversation. Address terms are authentic because every time people use language to communicate each other, they commonly call or refer to others by using address terms which are appropriate to them.

There are various ways on how people address others such as by using title, by first name, by last name, by nickname, or by some combination of these (Wardough, 2006: 267). The choice of certain types of address terms is reflected in the condition of the speaker. For example, the use of titles such as *Doctor* or *Professor* to address other people indicates the least

intimate relationship between the speaker and the addressee (Wardough, 2006: 268). It can be concluded that the speaker and the addressee do not know each other and do not have a close relationship. This example proves that if someone does not know the way to address people, they will ruin the communication.

Studying address terms always becomes interesting linguistic research as the use of address terms can reveal many things including the identity of the speakers, the power and authority of the speakers, and the distance and relationship between the speakers. Therefore, people need to understand the types and the social factors behind the choice before using a certain type of address terms.

In this research, the researcher uses a British biographical romantic drama entitled *The Theory of Everything*. The movie is chosen as the object of the research because the conversations all characters represent our daily life conversations, and they employ or use some types of address

terms. Through this movie, people can see that address terms can be used for any reasons depending on the situational contexts. For example, the use of address terms in college will be different from the use of address terms at home. Therefore, the phenomena of address terms can be obstacles for the audience who does not understand the rules of address terms.

Based on the phenomena of address terms, the researcher concentrates on two problems regarding address terms phenomenon. The first problem is related to the types of address terms. In analyzing the types of address terms, the researcher employed the theory of address terms proposed by Chaika (1982) and Wardaugh (2006). According to Chaika (1982: 47-50), the types of address terms are first name (FN), title with name (TLN), title only (T), last name (LN), and special name (SN). In addition, Wardaugh (2006: 268) has his own types of address terms. He states that the types of address terms are first

name (FN), title with last name (TLN), title alone (T), last name (LN), pet name (PN), and kinship term (KT).

The second problem is social factors that affect the characters in using certain address terms. In a communication, people will address other people in different way. They address people based on the context whether they are in formal or informal contexts. There are some factors that influence the speaker to choose certain types of address terms toward the addressee. To find out the social factors of address terms, this research uses the theory classified by Wardaugh (2006). He concludes that there are nine social factors of address terms. They are particular occasion (PO), social status or rank of the other (SS), gender (G), age (A), family relationship (FR), occupational hierarchy (OH), transactional status (TS), race (R), and degree of intimacy (DI).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research applied descriptive qualitative method since

the data of this research were analyzed descriptively. As stated by Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009: 166-167), qualitative research relies on people's interpretation of their own experience. Related to its purpose, the qualitative research is more about how to make description than prediction of the data. Qualitative research method applied in this research is aimed to present the research in the form of words description instead of numbers and statistics. It was not only analyzing and describing the data but also interpreting the data to get a rich and more in-depth understanding of address terms in *The Theory of Everything* movie.

There were two kinds of data sources in this research: a primary data source and a secondary data source. The primary data source of this research was the movie and the movie script. The secondary data source was books and journals related to the topic of this research. The data were in form of sentences, clauses, or words spoken by the characters in the movie. The

contexts of the data were dialogues. The researcher took some steps during the data collection: downloading the movie along with its script, making the data sheet, and categorizing the raw data into the sheet.

Lincoln and Guba (in Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009: 188-9) state that in a qualitative method, the researcher acts as the main instrument. The researcher herself was the main and primary instrument because she planned the research, collected the data, classified the data, analyzed the data, made interpretations, made conclusions, and reported the results. Furthermore, the secondary instrument of this research was data sheet. The data sheet was functioned to collect the data of address terms from the sources.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

From all the analyzed utterances, the total data collected in this research are 40 data. There are five types of address terms found in *The Theory of Everything* movie.

Those types are first name (FN), title with last name (TLN), title only (T), special name (SN), and kinship term (KT). The most frequently used is first name (FN). The massive use of first name by the characters of the movie is affected by the scenes and circumstances in the movie. The movie mostly takes place in a house. The use of first name to address people is one way to reach intimacy among the characters. First name not only appears when the setting of the conversation is in a house, but also appears when the conversation occurs in a college area.

In relation with the social factors which are influence the use of address terms by the characters, not all the social factors mentioned by Wardaugh are found in this research. There are five social factors of address terms found in the movie. They are particular occasion (PO), social status (SS), age (A), family relationship (FR), and degree of intimacy (DI). The most frequently used is degree of intimacy (DI). The use of first name to address someone else indicates

equality and familiarity. When people address someone else by using his/her first name, it is a sign of considerable intimacy. Degree of intimacy is dominantly performed by the characters, since the settings of the conversations mostly take place in a house. In a house, the interactions between the members of the family are mostly depicted.

### 1. Types of Address Terms Uttered by the Characters in *The Theory of Everything* Movie

#### a. First Name

The following is an example of first name.

Dennis Sciama	: Have you even bothered, <b>Stephen?</b>
Stephen Hawking	: Uh...sorry. (Stephen sets two train timetables on the table. Others push the timetables down the desk to Sciama, who picks them up.)
Dennis Sciama	: Right. Train timetables?
Sp	: Dennis Sciama
H	: Stephen Hawking (AT/S-4/ P9/D-5)

It is clear that the example above shows that Dennis Sciama addresses

Stephen Hawking using “Stephen” which belongs to first name (FN) type. Stephen arrives late to Dennis Sciama’s class. Then, Stephen sets two train timetables on the table. One of several physicists pushes the train timetables down the desk. Sciama picks them up and looks at the timetables. Unexpectedly, they are filled with tiny formulas and calculations. Sciama registers growing amazement and everyone staring at Stephen. In this dialogue, Dennis Sciama addresses his student, Stephen, by using first name (FN). He always addresses Stephen by using first name (FN) in their communication. It was used to show power differential rather than intimacy.

b. Title with Last Name

An example of title with last name is presented in Dennis Sciama and Kip Thorne conversation.

Sciama	: So, in summary. As we know, chapter one—full of holes and lacks mathematical support.
	<b>Professor Thorne?</b>
Kip Thorne	: Chapter two—not really original—uses a lot of Roger’s ideas.
Penrose	: Chapter three? Too many unanswered questions.
Sp	: Dennis Sciama
H	: Kip Thorne
<b>(AT/S-19/P37/D19)</b>	

The above conversation takes place in a seminar room of Cambridge University. The conversation occurs between Professor Sciama and Professor Thorne. They are Stephen’s dissertation examiners. Before they give Stephen a time to prove his research, they have rights to give any questions and suggestions according to Stephen’s dissertation. In this conversation, Dennis Sciama addresses Kip Thorne by using title with last name (TLN), Professor Thorne, since they are in a formal occasion and institution. Moreover, title with last name (TLN) also used to show respect toward Kip Thorne as a lecturer.

c. Title only

The example of title only is presented as follows.

Stephen	: Can I get two or more please?
Bartender	: Yeah, <b>sir</b> .
Stephen	: And some change for the payphone.
Bartender	: Yeah, <b>sir</b> .
Sp	: Bartender
H	: Stephen Hawking
<b>(AT/S-4/ P8/D-2)</b>	

The above conversation happens in a pub. The conversation occurs between a bartender and Stephen Hawking. Stephen goes to a pub with his friends to play pinball. While his friends are playing pinball, Stephen suddenly remembers that Jane gives a napkin to him. Jane writes her phone number on the napkin. Then, Stephen decides to make a call with Jane. Stephen asks to the bartender to give his money change in a coin. Stephen wants to call Jane via payphone. In this conversation, the bartender addresses Stephen by title only (T). Title only is the type which bartender is supposed to use. The lower status ones should respect the

ones with higher status as well as to show a social distance. Here, Stephen as a buyer has higher social status than the bartender.

d. Last Name

The use of last name in a daily conversation indicates inequality power between speaker and addressee. People who have more power will be addressed by title with last name. However, for those people who have less power will be addressed by their last name. The use of first name and last name may be overlapping since both of them indicate inequality power between the speaker and the addressee. The difference between them is that the use of first name may indicate inequality power and intimacy between the speaker and addressee where last name does not. However, the use of last name indicates inequality of power between the speaker and the addressee without containing intimacy.

Last name never appears in this research because the settings of the movie mostly took place in a house

and in a college area. Although a college is a place where last name (LN) should exist due to the politeness and respect, it does not appear in the movie.

e. Special Name

An instance of special name is presented below.

Jane	: I need help.
Stephen	: Everything is fine. We're just a normal family.
Jane	: We're not a normal family!
Stephen	: <b>Robbie</b> —your mother's very angry at me.
Sp	: Stephen Hawking
H	: Robert
(AT/S-31/P50/D-23)	

The above example occurs in a car when Stephen and family are on the way going back to home. Jane feels angry and disappointed. She tells Stephen that their family is not good. She needs a help to take care of their children and her husband. She has difficulty in working on her thesis. However, Stephen is always trying to convince that their family is fine and does not need some helps. In the conversation, Stephen addresses his

son by using special name (SN), “Robbie”. It indicates that they have a close relationship as father and son. Moreover, the conversation took place in an informal situation that did not required formality.

f. Pet Name

The use of pet name in a daily conversation indicates a very close relationship. People usually use this type to address someone who has a close relationship with them. It is originally used as intimacies within the family circle. This type is sometimes used by a couple who have their own nickname to the one they love, like *sweetie* or *sweetheart*. Pet name is a type of address terms that is rarely used in formal situations like in a college.

This type does not appear in the movie. The use of pet name is usually appearing in the conversation in which the participants are family member or a couple. Even if there are several conversations taking place in a house, this type is not applied in the movie.

### g. Kinship Term

An example of kinship term is presented in Jane Wilde and Beryl Wilde conversation.

Beryl	: I'd like to make a suggestion. Might sound a bit unusual, but I have seen it work wonders. I think, you should consider joining the church choir.
Jane	: <b>Mum</b> —I think that is possibly the most English thing anyone has ever said.
Beryl	: Maybe so.
Jane	: I used to love singing.
Beryl	: Just go.
Sp	: Jane Wilde
H	: Beryl Wilde
(AT/S-34/ P53/D-26)	

The above example is a conversation between Jane and her mother, Beryl Wilde. Jane tells her mother that she feels tired because of too many problems in her family. Jane needs something to refresh her mind. Then, Beryl gives her a suggestion to join a church choir. She knows that one of Jane's hobbies is singing. She loves singing since she was a child. Here, kinship term is used to show intimacy between a daughter and her mother.

The intimacy between them can be seen from the way Jane gives an agreement when her mother gives a suggestion to join the church choir. The use of kinship term "mum" here is also a result of a family relation that exists between Jane and her mother. Kinship term in the conversation is used in an appropriate way because in line with the concept of address terms which states that a family relation factor can be indicated through the use of kinship term.

## 2. Social Factors Affecting the Choice of Address Terms Uttered by the Characters in *The Theory of Everything* Movie in Using Certain Types of Address Terms

### a. Particular occasion

There is an example of the use of address terms influenced by particular occasion performed by Sciana as follows:

Sciama : So, what now?  
 Stephen : Prove it. To prove with a single equation that time has beginning. Wouldn't that be nice, **Professor?** One single elegant equation to explain everything?  
 Sciama : Yes. It would. It would indeed.  
 Sp : Stephen Hawking  
 H : Dennis Sciama  
 (AT/S-19/P38/D-21)

The conversation takes place in a seminar room of Cambridge University. After the dissertation examination done, Dennis Sciama asks about Stephen's plans after doing the research. Stephen answers that he wants to prove his research. Stephen addresses Dennis Sciama by using title only (T) since they are in a formal occasion and institution. Besides, Stephen wants to respect Dennis Sciama as his lecturer. The use of title only (T) also shows social distance among the student and the lecturer. As a student, Stephen has a lower social status than Dennis Sciama.

b. Social status or rank of the other

The example of the use of address terms that influenced by social status is as follows:

Sciama : Come in, **Stephen.** How are you?  
 Stephen : Fine.  
 Sciama : Would you like to take a seat?  
 Stephen : No, thank you.  
 Sp : Dennis Sciama  
 H : Stephen Hawking  
 (AT/S-19/ P37/D-18)

The conversation happens in the seminar room of Cambridge University. Stephen comes back after a long time he is hospitalized. The conversation occurs when Stephen has a dissertation exam. The dissertation is about his theory of black holes. Stephen has three dissertation examiners. They are Dennis Sciama, Kip Thorne, and Penrose. Dennis Sciama addresses Stephen Hawking by using first name (FN) in their communication is not to show intimacy, but to show power differential. There is a different social status between them. In the school

system, teachers/lecturers always have higher power than the students because they are the ones who educate the students. As Sciama's student, Stephen has a lower status compared to him.

c. Gender

In a certain society, gender also affects the choice of address terms. Gender (G) is a social factor that never appeared in the data because the movie mainly told Stephen's step in achieving his success to be a doctor of astrophysics. He also becomes the originator of the black holes theory. In addition, the movie tells the love story between Stephen Hawking and Jane Wilde. During the movie, the characters never employ address containing terms of gender (G) as the social factor.

d. Age

The datum presented below is the example of the use of address terms influenced by age performed by the characters.

Frank Hawking	: Ah, so, <b>Jane</b> ? What are you studying?
Jane Wilde	: Arts. Languages, poetry. I'm thinking of doing a PhD eventually.
Frank Hawking	: Oh? What in?
Jane Wilde	: Medieval poetry of the Iberian Peninsula.
Sp	: Frank Hawking
H	: Jane Wilde
<b>(AT/S-8/ P15/D-7)</b>	

The above example is a conversation between Frank Hawking and Jane Wilde. The conversation takes place in a dining room of Hawking family's house. For the first time Stephen invites Jane to join his family's Sunday lunch. Stephen introduces Jane to his family. Frank Hawking asks many questions to Jane. Jane answers every single question easily. In this conversation, Frank Hawking uses first name (FN) to addresses Jane. In fact, Frank is older than Jane so it affected him to use such type of address term.

e. Family relationship

The example of the use of address terms that influenced by family relationship is as follows:

Robert Hawking	: <b>Daddy</b> , look out! Let's get <b>Mummy</b> !
Stephen Hawking	: Come on...
Robert Hawking	: Gonna get you! Mummy! Mummy! Come and look!
Sp	: Robert Hawking
H	: Stephen & Jane
(AT/S-32/P51/D-25)	

The conversation above takes a place in Stephen Hawking's house. In his motorized wheelchair, Stephen runs after Robert from room to room at full speed. He looks extremely thrilled with the chair as he smashes into furniture. Jane tries to smile when she working on her thesis. Here, the use of kinship terms (KT), "daddy" and "mummy", here is a result of a family relation that exists between Robert and his parents. Kinship term (KT) in the conversation is used in an appropriate way because in line with the concept of address terms which states that a

family relation factor can be indicated through the use of kinship term.

f. Occupational hierarchy

The choice of the types of address terms is determined by the circumstance around the place where people work. Occupational hierarchy (OH) greatly influences the way people address other people in their place of work. The different circumstance of field of work such as in a military and business world affect the choice of address term. People who have a higher occupational status receive title with last name (TLN) when they are addressed. On the other hand, people who have lower status receive first name (FN) when they are being addressed.

There are no data found in the conversations that have this social factor. This factor does not appear in the movie although the settings or the context of the conversations are in the college where people have an occupational hierarchy to be upheld. The characters use title only (T) or title with last name (TLN) only to show

respect and politeness as their nature as students to their lecturers or as the younger to the elder.

g. Transactional status

In a society, someone's social status can be clearly seen through the use of address terms. The different social status will determine which types of address terms are applied. The inequality in power between higher and lower social status can be seen in the use of title with last name (TLN) and first name (FN) in a communication. Beside social status, there is a transactional status that also determines the use of certain types of address term in a communication. Transactional status is a status achieved by specialty in a certain field of work, so other people follow his/her instruction.

Like occupational hierarchy, there is not any transactional status found in the movie. Transactional status can be seen in doctor-patient and priest-penitent relationship. The conversations mostly take place in a house and in a college where no one

achieves a certain specialization in the work field.

h. Race

In a certain society, race determines people in the way they choose certain type of address term. Race is a social factor that never appears in the movie because the movie mainly tells about Stephen's step in achieving his success to be a doctor of astrophysics. He also becomes the originator of the black holes theory. Race is not found because the characters inevitably respect each other and override race since the settings of the movie mostly happen in a house and in a college.

i. Degree of Intimacy

The examples of the use of address terms influenced by degree of intimacy are as follows:

Brian	: Oh, come on, get up. How many did you get?
Stephen	: Morning, <b>Brian</b> .
Brian	: Good afternoon, <b>Stephen</b> . How many of the Impossible questions did you do?
Stephen	: I have no idea what you're talking about.
Brian	: How many of Sciamma's questions did you get?
Stephen	: None.
Brian	: <b>Stephen</b> , are you aware that you have voluntarily embarked upon a PHD in physics at the most prestigious college in England?
Stephen	: Yes.
Brian	: Oh, good.
Sp	: Stephen Hawking, Brian
H	: Brian, Stephen Hawking

(AT/S-5/ P11/D-3)

The above conversation happens in Stephen's room. The conversation occurs between Stephen and his best friend, Brian. Brian is looking for Stephen's answer sheet of Dennis Sciamma's questions. Brian goes to Stephen's desk, but he finds nothing. Stephen has not done the assignment given by Sciamma because he feels sick at that day. In the conversation, it is seen that Brian and Stephen are using first name (FN) in addressing each

other. Here, Stephen and Brian are using first name instead of other types because they have known each other and they have a close relationship. Moreover, they do not have any power difference that makes them should respect each other.

### CONCLUSION

To summarize the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the address terms uttered by the characters in *The Theory of Everything* movie contain certain types of address terms as what Wardaugh and Chaika said. In reference to the first objective of the research, there are five types of address terms found in the movie. First name (FN), title with last name (TLN), title only (T), special name (SN), and kinship term (KT) are found in the address terms types uttered by the characters in this movie. First name is the most appearing type found in the characters' conversations. The massive use of first name by the characters of the movie is affected by the scenes and circumstances in the movie. The movie mostly takes place in a house. The use

of first name to address people is one way to reach intimacy among the characters. First name not only appears when the setting of the conversation is in a house, but also appears when the conversation occurs in a college area.

In relation with the second objective of the research, the social factor of address terms which is mostly influence the use of address terms by the characters is degree of intimacy. In this kind of settings, first name is usually used to address someone as it indicates equality and familiarity. This type of address terms is regarded as a sign of considerable intimacy. Degree of intimacy (DI) is dominantly performed by the characters since the

settings of the conversations mostly take place in a house in which the interactions between the members of the family are mostly depicted.

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