INSHA' ALLAH: ITS PRAGMATIC MEANINGS IN RELIGIOUS MEETING

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the pragmatic meanings of *Insha' Allah* used by the members of an Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Association (IIDA) in Malang, East Java, Indonesia. The study is based on the collection and analysis of 13 hours of recording of naturally occurring conversational data, which reflect issues central to the social and religious life of this community. In this context, the use of *Insha' Allah* is examined to understand why it occurs, and what it tells us about the social and linguistic interactions occurring in this community. As a basis of understanding the issue, this study draws on sociological perspectives to analyse the data, incuding the Situational and Metaphorical approaches (Blom & Gumperz, 1972), and Politeness Theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987). To collect the data for the present study, observations, questionnaires and interviews were employed.

This study finds that the reason for using *Insha' Allah* are influenced by situational and metaphorical factors. From the situational point of view, the reasons for using *Insha' Allah* are influenced by such factors as participant, setting and topic. Among these factors, the participant plays the most important role. Despite the fact that the participants come from a wide range of social backgrounds, and vary by age, level of education, wealth, occupation and status in society, within the IIDA community, however, the role of the participants is constrained only by particular social positions. Participants of higher social status, such as an *imam,* although he may be relatively young, will receive respectful treatment from the participants. This *Imam* is respected not simply because of his age, but also because of his hierarchical positions, and thus, requires the participants to use a polite language to respect the *imam.*

In the present study, the decision to use a particular language or variety is determined not only by considering *what* language is used to *whom, how,* and *where,* but also by taking into consideration for *what aim.* Thus, the reason for using *Insha' Allah* to a younger *Imam* will accrue religious merit. From the metaphorical point of view, the participants' perception of using *Insha' Allah* is to maintain individual relationship, such as (1) to express politeness, (2) to be more intimate, and (3) to show solidarity.

This chapter has presented two important findings: (1) the religious meanings of *Insha' Allah* and (2) the pragmatic meanings of *Insha' Allah.* In the present study, however, *Insha' Allah* was mostly used to express the participants' total submission to God. The result of the present study did not completely support to the results of study carried out by Johns (1996) and Nazzal (2001). These authors found that *Insha' Allah* is used as an indirect speech act of rejection. It is found that **nggih, ngaten** and **saged** were frequently used after *Insha' Allah.* The

function of these words was to signal that the participants were about to finish their utterance. Furthermore, the word **nggih** also appeared before *Insha' Allah*. The metaphorical meaning of **nggih** in this instance suggests that the speaker responded to something or someone hesitantly, or used it as a quick reply for confirmation.

The pragmatic meanings of *Insha' Allah* were used not only to refer the future events, but also the pas events. For example, *Insha' Allah* was used by the participants to (1) state a hesitance, (2) make a decisive suggestion, (3) draw a conclusion, (4) verify a situation, (5) convince the audience, (6) initiate request or command, and (7) apologize.