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## The honorific styles of the ethnolinguistic communities: An ethnography

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this descriptive-qualitative study with ethnographic design was to explore the extant honorific styles of the identified ethnolinguistic communities. Data from 37 selected participants from the Mandaya, Kagan, and Mansaka Tribes of Tagum City who took part in the KII and FGD interview using validated qualitative interview guide pointed to insight. Based on the analyses of data, the findings reveal the existence of the following appellative honorifics: Kinship, Sub-kinship, Rank, Aged, Professional, No Naming, and Identity Honorifics in the Mandaya, Kagan, and Mansaka Tribes of Tagum City. Moreover, it is also found that bound morpheme markers such as *ma*, *dag*, *da*, *pyag*, *an*, *gi*, *on*, *ka*, *di*, and *ba* exist in the dialects of the ethnolinguistic communities which describe and define the person's characteristics and abilities in the honorific styles.

**Keywords:** Applied linguistics, Honorific styles, Ethnolinguistic communities, Ethnography, Philippines

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### 1. Introduction

Honorifics are systems of linguistic signs linked by their user to stereotypes of honor or respect (Agha, 2004). This is evident in the claim of Anggrawan and Miswaty (2021) that different ethnolinguistic communities have different perceptions of honorific styles as it is grounded on their cultural values and norms that guided them in communicating with another social group. It is for this reason that any deviation in the use of the language of a social group may give rise to impoliteness.

Specifically, the lack of knowledge of honorifics in a cultural context could lead to impoliteness and conflict (Mills, 2009). Politeness matters especially in addressing indigenous people. The truth of the matter, impoliteness due to the misuse of honorifics destroys a relationship. It causes misunderstanding, especially for ethnolinguistic communities where social structure is engrained. Alam and Al-Muthmainnah (2020), posited that politeness as behavior is very closely related to the culture and language of an ethnolinguistic community. According to their research findings, impoliteness in a language needs to be studied so that it can be a material for character formation based on local wisdom and strengthening of identity and language manners.

In the Philippine context, honorifics is used as one of the techniques for regulating people's personalities and behaviors (Agbayani, 2022). It is important to note however that ethnolinguistic communities' languages, like the culture they represent, are not fixed but constantly changing (Arzadon et al., 2016). As a result, the risk of impoliteness in honorifics is very high. The City Tribal Council of Tagum City rallied for an Information Education Campaign (IEC) through the proper usage of honorifics of the different tribes with the Department of Education (DepEd) after parleying an incident of conflict caused by impoliteness in honorifics. The such incident motivated this endeavor to discover and address conflicts related to honorifics of ethnolinguistic groups with the vision of engraving honorific styles in one's knowledge to do away with impoliteness.

Intercultural communication among ethnolinguistic communities opens doors to various forms of impoliteness in honorifics as culturally different people attempt to live together (Elegbe & Nwachukwu, 2017). A problem of

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impoliteness in honorifics and peer conflict was experienced among Korean children's language socialization (Ahn, 2020). Another problem of impoliteness in honorifics was realized in the instance of indigenous forces in Chechnya (Souleimanov & Aliyev, 2015). Here, socio-cultural codes embedded in broader socio-cultural value systems intrinsic to honorific societies function as mechanisms shaping conflict transformation and affecting its outcome as rooted in their hearts and minds.

Those who lack knowledge in the use of honorifics according to their cultural resource are prone to impoliteness conflict problems. Impoliteness in honorifics in the field of pragmatics was extensively explored however, impoliteness in honorifics as an ethnographic study in the context of ethnolinguistics was seldom accounted. Honorifics are one of the most appropriate sites to investigate the relationship between grammar and culture (Romero, 2014). Echoing this is the study of Bhatt (2015), where honorifics in a language were found to have a very important role in the interplay of respect, familiarity, and formality based on age, familial relationships, level of personal acquaintance, social hierarchy, status, religiousness, power, and so forth among the members of society.

Honorifics mark one's identity but may also be a site of resistance, empowerment, solidarity, and discrimination. Lytra (2016) and Yonemoto (2020) postulated that these are developed because of social and cultural influence. Moreover, more studies have shown that culture and language identity are two very important points for ethnolinguistic communities as they signify belongingness as a matter of self and other ascription in society. The distinct features of each culture determine how the speakers express their thoughts (Larina, 2015) even in communicating honorifics. This study will bridge ethnolinguistic communities' language and culture barriers to avoid conflict because of impoliteness and lack of knowledge.

## **2. Literature review**

### **Honorifics**

Honorifics are one of the many expressions of respect that may be conveyed in any language (Izadi, 2015). They are a specific expression for conveying respect or politeness by modifying the style of saying the same thing. However, not many languages have grammatical and lexical systematic expressions (Yonemoto, 2020). In the same way, Tsuisui (2021), posited that the use of honorifics is governed by norms, and their use is influenced by several social factors. Chen and Lee (2020) describe that impoliteness is inferred on the grounds of the positive values that honorifics are typically associated with, such as respect. Similarly, rudeness can be inferred when honorifics are not stereotypically anticipated. As presented, it can be presumed that honorific systems vary from a set of choices speakers make when referring to another person or to that person's actions (Sylak-Glassman, 2016).

Moreover, a cross-culturally robust notion that words and expressions achieve the social effects of marking deference indicates only a partial grasp of the total semiotic fact (Wolfram & Schilling, 2015). In fact, the study of Fleming and Slotta (2018) revealed that the referential and semantic properties of kin terms and names motivate culturally grounded, but convergent, conceptualizations of kin terms as honorific and names as anti-honorific.

Diverse cultures and languages create complex identities. To this end, honorific styles have several systems of communicating politeness and deference. From such can also arise several problems and concerns in terms of communication in ethnolinguistic communities. First, politeness is often taken for granted. A speaker usually attends to face through giving deference or by way of conforming to the social norms according to which people are expected to behave to be appropriate (Izadi, 2015). Second, because of many cultural influences from outside the group, the politeness value of the group is also influenced (Siswandi & Setiawan, 2018). Third, the shift from one language to another resulted to errors due to lack of descriptors of situation explanation of the factors that influence (Zaman et al., 2018). Lastly, honorifics are sometimes used for stereotyping (Chen & Lee, 2021).

Honorifics have been important forms of deference as this promote unity and agreement in the community. The most common form of honorifics is those addressed to persons. Essentially, language and culture are so intertwined that what individuals think and believe will be reflected in their language, revealing parts of their society (Lee, 2020).

### **Honorific styles**

Honorific styles are honorifics expressed only in certain specific communities guided by their knowledge and experience of their culture and language. Honorific styles are widely directed as these will help maintain relationships and create a peaceful atmosphere in the community. In Dampelas sub-district Donggala Regency Central Sulawesi, Dampelas language honorific styles are based on referents because native speakers very much consider the selection and use of honorifics (Siswandi & Setiawan, 2019). While in Pematik community of West Cirebon, honorific styles were mostly address terms comprises of five areas: personal address terms, relative, occupation, title of both for academic and non-academic degree, and religious address terms (Afifah, 2017).

Honorific styles are also present in the speech of presidential candidates. It is revealed that the use of honorific styles is determined by proximity, position of power, and the situation of formality when the speech occurs (Widayati, 2020). It is for this reason that Agbayani in 2022 suggested to evaluate the language- and culture- specific dichotomy controlling the right employment of forms of address to recognize the universal propensity of address terms to reflect power and solidarity across cultures.

Consequently, honorific styles are used in obtaining compliance, model culturally appropriate ways of directing, and to practice appropriate directives (Thompson & Anderson, 2018; Suh, 2020). This goes to say that there are ideologies of politeness that governed the language choice and claimed membership in each ethnolinguistic community (Park, 2021).

Min et al. in 2016 stated that communication is essentially a social process influenced by the orientations of interpersonal relationships underpinned by philosophical foundations and value orientations. Thus, establishing interpersonal relationships and communication among social groups are the main reasons for using honorifics to avoid conflict. Chen and Lee (2021) revealed that people's interpretations of contextual meanings are constructed upon their knowledge of stereotypical meanings which can be examined through language ideologies. Consequently, the context was used in creating, using, and interpreting honorifics (Al-Rawi & Al-Assam, 2018) which resulted in different expressions of honorific styles to flattery, irony, mask aggression, etcetera.

Nevertheless, extensive theoretical knowledge in the use of honorifics will not suffice to gain linguistic and communicative skill, practical exercises are also needed in developing the skill (Duc-Harada, 2020). An instance was expounded in the study of Bhatt (2015) in the study entitled; Acquisition of Honorifics in Hindi: A Sociolinguistic Competence. The study revealed that the honorific style of Hindi is governed by a complex set of pragmatic rules and that it can be learned only through observation of the people's behavior in communication with one another, the reading of authentic texts, and the examination of the language use by different media.

Honorific styles indeed reflect the society, culture, and ideas of the ethnolinguistic communities as these are developed because of social and cultural influence (Yonemoto, 2020). More specifically, it is intrinsically linked to societal and individual beliefs about languages (Lytra, 2016). The same with Park's (2022) study of Korean learners, in which their attitudes and beliefs about language are influenced by social and cultural norms and ideologies, and impact the learners' motivations, goals, and investment in their language learning, that reflected in their identities. Ultimately, every ethnolinguistic community have their own honorific styles that echoes their culture, language, and identity.

**Appellative honorifics:** These honorific styles are those addressed to people according to part of speech and they are of two types: Pronoun Appellative Honorifics and Noun Appellative Honorifics (Min et al., 2016). In Chinese culture and language appellative honorifics have their counterparts in the humble form, and verbal honorific expressions which are regularly employed in formal verbal communication and correspondence. The use of polite language not only revealed self-cultivation and good breeding, but also demonstrates sophisticated linguistic competence (Lee, 2020). Lee (2020) posited that every language has its standards of polite speech. That is knowing properly "what to say", "when to say" and "to whom to say" indicates an individual's linguistic and communicative competence. And improper usage may offend the addressee and expose the linguistic incompetence of the speaker.

**Noun appellative honorifics:** Such appellative honorifics are sub-divided to which comprise of the following: General, Kinship, Sub-kinship, Rank, Aged, Professional, First Naming, and No Naming (Min et al., 2016). In Northern Kurmanji honorific styles, noun appellative honorifics sometimes has the core function reversed to show disrespect in the context of irony (Abdulaziz & Mohammad, 2020). Specifically, there are no restrictions to the use of honorifics. Social dynamics of royal courts, aristocracies, and hierarchical societies are not prerequisites to trigger the use of honorifics; hence, they can also be found in day-to-day interactions or for the sake of denoting respect and distance.

**General appellative honorifics:** According to Abdulaziz and Muhammad (2020) general appellative honorifics are honorifics used in general situations. Min et al. (2016), refers to a title before the name. In the instance of the English language, general appellative honorifics are Mr, Mrs, Miss, Sir, and Ma'am. EFL learners in Indonesia perceived that the practice of these honorifics has no difference from the ones applied in Indonesian culture. This was revealed in the study of Herlina and Tarwana (2020) entitled, EFL learners' perspective on English Honorifics (EHs) in Indonesia. As a result, if there are cultural encounters while learning English, they will switch automatically to the Indonesian culture. The use of general appellative honorifics in Chinese honorific styles showed the relationships between participants in language situations. Moreover, it shows that power-sharing was highly respected and visible in relations between authorities and people (Grzybek & Sztuka, 2020).

The study of Choksi (2021) entitled, Structure, Ideology, Distribution: The Dual as Honorific in Santali, revealed that the use of the dual pronominal form in Santali, an Austro-Asiatic language spoken in eastern India deferential honorific in a generalized sense, regardless of the kinship relation between interactants. However, in the new usage, the use of generalized honorifics, as well as movements that have aligned the use of such honorifics with projects for Santal autonomy centered around the spread of a distinct script for the language. This is because of several factors, including the increasing exposure to education in the dominant Indo-Aryan vernaculars such as Bengali and Hindi. It was evident in the study that notions of tradition and modernity, cultural and ethnic affiliation, and changing ideas of respect have shaped the ideological field conditioning the use and distribution of the honorific dual in Santali.

In addition, the study of Takeuchi and Dibello (2021) about Keigo Japanese honorifics underscored the importance of foreign language teachers reflecting on language ideologies that affect classroom practices and advocating for L2

speaker legitimacy. Keigo honorifics in Japanese are used in terms of age, social standing, status of interlocutors, social relationships and familiarity of interlocutors, group membership, and referents. Barke in 2010 argued that speakers draw not only on cultural norms but also on their own "personal interactional goals" to make distinctions between whether or which honorific forms to use. The study demonstrated the complexity of Keigo and go beyond prescriptive depictions that limit Keigo's function to expressing formality, respect, or hierarchy. Instead, such findings underscore how Keigo can also be used strategically to accomplish a wider range of goals. This premise provides the material that the use of honorific styles grew as people in the ethnolinguistic community also progressed.

**Kinship appellative honorifics.** Kinship terms belong to the important parts of the appellation that reflect the close relationship between communication parties (Maisuti, 2019) to show respect to addressee's relatives. In Likpakpaln language they have categorized into three: agnatic, matrilineal and affinal kinship address forms, of which matrilineal and affinal kinship addresses are by complementary filiation. And that the usage of these kinship addresses in communicative interactions was greatly tied to the Birkpakpaam honorific styles kinship structure and social universe (Bisilki, 2017).

**Sub-kinship appellative honorifics.** These are non-relative terms which may be addressed with terms of a relationship (Min et al., 2016). These are also terms which are originally family expressions, but their meanings are extended to address nonrelatives as well. According to Abdulaziz and Mohammad (2020), parent's close friends are usually referred to as Auntie or Uncle. Uncle Sam is the nickname to refer to American Government (Min et al, 2016). This was true to American English and Chinese honorific styles where the terms remain basically family terms, but their meanings have been considerably extended (Min et al., 2016).

**Rank appellative honorifics.** Rank appellative honorifics differ in every culture and language. One can seldom find rank honorifics with first name and full name in English conversations (Abdulaziz & Mohammad, 2020). In Chinese honorific styles, social appellation include emotional element, family name, the age embodying "old" and "young", given name, occupation/job title, general appellation, and quasi-kinship appellation (it is the normal condition, excluding the special structure position order of "senior Mr. Fang"). In English honorific styles however, social appellation only involve emotional element, general appellation, occupation/job title, family name, and given name (Fang, 2016). In the study of Yeboah et al. (2021), Akan honorific styles were ascribed to an addressee based on his/her power or the social class, age, profession, gender, and others. It revealed that power-based honorifics are always asymmetric and nonreciprocal. Correspondingly, rank appellative honorifics are very particular to the social status of the person.

**Aged appellative honorifics.** According to Min et al., in 2016, aged appellative honorifics are frequently used in ordinary Chinese language to establish direct and indirect terms of address for the sake of respect and are used to address persons who are either old in age or senior in experience. However, in America, "old" connotes anything that should be discarded, something that is useless or worthless, hence the word "old" was avoided.

**Professional appellative honorifics.** In American English, this honorific styles are associated to certain professions that can be used as titles, such as Professor, Doctor, Judge and Nurse for people who have qualifications as such (Abdulaziz & Mohammad, 2020). But in Chinese honorific styles, it has evolved to a set of honorific terms of direct address for persons of various professions. The frequent form of address in Chinese is the use of the surname with the person's profession (Min et al., 2016).

**First naming appellative honorifics.** This honorific style is more common in American English than in Chinese where the name alone, whether it is for man or woman was enough. Americans tend to use just the first name and leave out the term of relationship (Min et al., 2016). Further, Min et al. (2016) said that in general, the first name address form is used reciprocally by speakers of American English when two individuals are of similar age and social status. The reciprocal title-and-last-name pattern is characteristic only of formal exchanges. The nonreciprocal pattern when someone addresses another person by first name but is addressed in return by title and last name is used in exchanges between individuals who differ significantly either in age or social and occupational status. In American people to address others is by using the first name—Tom, Michael, Linda, Jane, etc.—rather than calling the person "Mr Summers, Mrs Howard or Miss Jones" (Min et al., 2016).

**No naming appellative honorifics.** These honorific styles are addressed to close friends and family members that frequently overlook address terms to strangers, relatives, and friends (Min et al., 2016). It indicates that despite the lack of honorifics, the level of respect is maintained. The structure of the statement indicates civility. Using Ide's concepts of volition and choice, discernment.

## **Ethnolinguistics**

Ethnolinguistics is an ethnosemantic, anthropolinguistic branch of linguistics which appeared on the border between ethnography and lexicology, and which is engaged into a comprehensive investigation of the mutual relation of ethnos and its language (Canalp, 2018). Likewise, Riley (2017) defined ethnolinguistics as a study of a group's experience of

life as it is organized and expressed through the group's language tools and as a science whose aim is to examine the relationships between a language on the one hand and society and culture on the other. Moreover, Riley (2017) discusses that the main areas of ethnolinguistics include the relationship between language and culture, communicative practices, and cognitive models of language and thought. To this, the ethnolinguist tries to describe and understand the role of language in shaping the ways in which members of a group relate to the world, to one another and to others. These ways of knowing and being are the layers which identities are made of. Identities, that is, consist of meanings, and specific configurations of meanings can be implemented functionally as roles through the community's communicative practices. However, for Locke, identity is about knowledge and experience-based approach, 'you are what you know'.

Likewise, Budasi et al. (2021) claims that language and culture are related to each other, and that language can be maintained through cultural activities. Thus, if culture is disappearing, there is a possibility that a part of the language is lost. Hence, studying the relationship of indigenous people, language, and culture is very important to maintain their ethnolinguistic identity. To this end, it provides the presumption that identity can be influenced if it is immersed in different factors of stimuli and the ever-changing society to which a person belongs. It is for this reason that in the study of ethnolinguistics the identity of the group be established based on their culture, knowledge of the language, and experiences in communicating the language.

### **Ethnolinguistic communities**

An ethnolinguistic community is a group of people in a community that has a common language, cultural practices, and values (Kramsch, 1998). Indigenous peoples are considered ethnolinguistic communities as they share a language, common ethnicity, cultural heritage, and have their own system of politeness. Ethnolinguistics examine ethnolinguistic communities to describe their identity based on their knowledge and experience of their culture and language. To this, numerous literatures provide the struggles and concerns of indigenous people in maintaining their identity and keeping it intact through generations. A specific instance is the Dumagat ethnolinguistic community in the Cordillera where self-assertiveness in using their language was used to establish ethnolinguistic vitality to place their social identity and other social psychological processes underlying ethnolinguistic behavior in their appropriate sociostructurally contexts (Mabuan, 2021).

According to Mabuan (2021) the indigenous communities are in the continuum of language reinvigoration and revitalization and must implicate inter-level agencies to design feasible framework to document, cultivate, and protect their indigenous language for future generations. Nevertheless, the ethnic groups of Nyala, the capital of South Darfur State, found a way to maintain their identity. They take pride in using Arabic and other native language in different domains and because of this their language was found to have revitalized (Garrie & Mugaddam, 2015). Studies of ethnolinguistic communities provide evidence of how culture and language are related to each other. Such relationship determines the complexity of the group's identity. Being one aspect of language that is the bearer of identity to ethnolinguistic communities, honorifics cannot be undermined. The relationship of honorifics to culture presented several stories of how language ideologies, context dependency, and linguistic knowledge contributes to what, how, and when honorifics was used and in what linguistic feature.

This was seen in the indigenous language of Java Island where honorific expressions were found to be integrated in greetings and verbs in the aspect of religion (Zaman et al., 2018) as well as the use of honorifics in the Banten language reflecting the importance of superiority and courtesy (Juwita, 2019). These tell a story of the ethnolinguistic communities' adherence of maintaining mutual relationship through their communication. In conjunction, how honorifics is constructed and communicated is very important as this was rooted on their culture. Like the Austronesian honorific registers, its differences and similarities across cases of honorific language have found that linguistic and cultural ideologies are not divorced from social infrastructures (Fleming, 2016). The same goes with the Persian honorifics where it's use must be consistent with the orientation to social meanings and actions in terms of the moral order they invoke (Izadi, 2015).

### **Grammatical markers**

In language, word groups are not a phenomenon with a fixed boundary, words tend to gravitate towards one lexical-grammatical category and execute their purpose (Karimov, 2022). Karimov in 2022 studied the anthroponyms of the Uzbek people that have been developed through the conversion of clear and abstract noun appeals as an expression of children's desire, intention, and aim to be toughened, mature, robust, strong, energetic, courageous, cherished, and respected. He found out that based on the inspiration of the Uzbek people's national customs, traditions, and values linked with naming, the infant was given the names of heavenly bodies, animals, birds, fruit and ornamental trees, and flowers. As a result, the names for such concepts have been anthropomically converted.

Morpheme is the meaningful-smallest grammatical unit of language, and the unit cannot be further analyzed into smaller units (Kaharuddin et al., 2020). Further, Wijana (2011) stated that morpheme is the smallest grammatical units functioning as word formers. Consequently, a morpheme has a grammatical or lexical meaning (Nurhayati et al., 2020). Silue and Kone (2021) in their study entitled, Grammatical morphemes, conceptual structures, and semantic representation revealed that grammatical morphemes cannot be treated as abstract symbols devoid of intrinsic meaning. The syntactic configurations which characterize the notions of plurality expressed by the morphemes evidence the types of conceptualizations attached to them.

In Malay language, in the study of Hasyim (2020), the Makassar dialect has unique morphemes, such as ka, ta, nu, ki. Na, ko-, etc. Unique morphemes in form of words are such as pale (only), sedeng (again), bela (that's it), and so on. More unique morphemes of particles are mine-, ji-, pi-, pa-, mo-, etc. Using these unique morphemes before words would make different in sense of the words from using them after words. The unique bound morphemes are different from one another such as the frequency of their occurrences, their positions to be involved in word formations, the process of acquisition, the cultural values existing in them, the age and gender of their users, etc (Garrett, 1993). Morphemes are further classified to bound and free morphemes.

**Bound morphemes:** Bound morphemes cannot stand alone, they must be connected (or bound) to another morpheme because they cannot exist independently without being joined or attached to another morpheme (Astuti et al., 2021). Similarly, Martini (2016) posited that bound morphemes are also called affixes which can be prefixes, infixes, or suffixes. Derivational morphemes are bound morphemes or affixes which derive (create) new words by either changing the meaning or the part of speech or both English only has prefixes and suffixes. Particularly, bound morphemes can be inflectional or derivational.

Mollica et al. (2021) posited that grammatical marking features in language such as number, tense, and evidentiality varies widely across languages. Despite this variation, grammatical markers support efficient information transfer from speakers to listeners. The study revealed that functionalist accounts of language suggest that forms are paired with meanings in ways that support efficient communication. Moreover, previous work on grammatical marking suggests that word forms have lengths that enable efficient production, and work on the semantic typology of the lexicon suggests that word meanings represent efficient partitions of semantic space. Grammatical markers are also found in honorifics in specific languages which has varying semantic meaning. In the study of Arini (2016) entitled; Politeness distinction: Terms of address use by Banjereese Youth in Daily Life, honorific politeness was seen in the grammatical markers. Where 'ulun and pian' are the politest one, 'aku and ikam' are the less polite one, and 'nyawa and unda' are the least polite. The use of these markers reflects the quality of person, the family influence, and the education achieved by the interlocutor.

The same observation was seen in the study of Coleman et al. (2020) where addressee-related honorifics was evident in the markers: (-su)mnida) for heavily formal honorific, (-oyo/ayoy) for gently formal honorific, (-o/a) for soft casual non-honorific, and (-nu)nda, -ta) for non-conversational/plain causal non-honorific. But the use of these markers depends on the choice and on the person to whom one is talking. In like manner, Yusri et al. (2020) found markers in Buginese language where the morphemes -ki, -ta, and -ni function as markers of language politeness. While morphemes -ko, - mu, and - no function as markers of language impoliteness. This is also consistent with the findings of Guillaume (2018) where the markers chidi 'affection' and ichenu 'compassion' and base 'depreciation' and madha 'depreciation' were found in the Takanan language.

Based on the above premised, honorifics reflect politeness, impoliteness, positive emotions, and negative emotions depending on the honorific styles of the ethnolinguistic community. It also proved that honorifics explored from indexical perspective have great contribution in the understanding of the dynamic and fluid functions of honorifics and their tenuous relation to politeness (Cook & Nakamura, 2021). Moreover, as emphasized by Tanabe (2021) the intricacies of meaning and politeness of any language have roots in social and cultural contexts. It is reflective of the culture and society of the native speakers. However, these lexicons vary across languages depending on their grammatical range.

In sum, studies proved that honorifics need to be practiced to properly use/apply in a particular situation. Not only it promotes deference but also language vitality. In terms of metapragmatic framework, it revealed that the rules of use are flexible and sensitive to the context where honorifics were used. Finally, honorifics can only be learned through observation in authentic social spaces of ethnolinguistic communities.

### **3. Research methodology**

This research employed an ethnography design. Specifically, it analyzed and described the honorific styles of the identified ethnolinguistic communities and the linguistic function of the grammatical markers that index honorific effect. It embraced the ethnographic design because it described and told a story of culture-sharing groups. Ethnography according to Creswell (2013) focuses on an entire culture-sharing group where ethnographers study the

meaning of the behavior, the language, and the interaction among the members of the culture-sharing group. Moreover, McGranahan (2018) pointed out that ethnography is the writing of the people, the writing of society, and the writing of culture. It is more than a method “but a much more all-encompassing and demanding way of knowing.”

In addition, this research utilized the methodology of investigation on the different queries about the honorific styles of the identified ethnolinguistic communities. Descriptive-qualitative research is understood as explicitly theory-dependent ways of describing, analyzing, and interpreting the collected data (Crismore, 1993). It is qualitative in nature as it is designed to inquire processes of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. In the handbook of qualitative research Denzin and Lincoln (2005) describe qualitative research as involving “an interpretative naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.” The researcher immersed herself in the natural setting conversing with the speakers to observe, note and analyze how the words are spoken and used.

There were 37 participants of the study all of which were native inhabitants of the Mandaya, Kagan, and Mansaka Tribes in the City of Tagum. 14 participants were Tribal leaders, 3 youth leaders, and 20 do not hold any position in the tribe. All were purposively selected based on their knowledge of the culture sharing group (Creswell, 2013). The selection of the participants are based on the suggestion of Creswell (2013) that the unit of analysis or so individuals is needed in an ethnographic study. For the KII, 5 participants aged 18-31 years old and 5 participants aged 32 years old and above, preferably the elders of the tribe, were selected. For the FGD, two groups were organized. The first group has seven participants aged 18-31 years old and the second group has seven participants aged 32 years old and above.

#### 4. Findings and discussions

##### 4.1. The extant honorific styles of the ethnolinguistic communities

###### Kinship appellative honorifics

The data that were collected showed the honorific styles of *Ompo, Babo, Lagina, Bapa, Kimud, Panganay, Ama, Ina, Anakon, Ig-Agaw, Baklog, Katuyag, Anak, Kaka, Ompo na Bubay, Ompo na Usog, Manong, Manang, Papa, and Mama*. These are honorific styles addressed to the closest family members, mother, father, brother, sister, auntie, uncle, niece, nephew, and grandparents. Honorific styles of the ethnolinguistic communities validate the claim of Maisuti (2019) that kinship terms are one of the important parts of appellation that reflects the close relationship between communication parties as these are terms ascribed to the closest family members. The results suggest that ethnolinguistic communities have set identifications to identify themselves as members of the tribe. In this case, they have considered language, honorific styles, as an important symbol of their identity. Wherein each ethnolinguistic community were able to establish their own social identity.

Such is a demonstration of the tribe’s effort to achieve positive identity as they were able to set their own honorific style of kinship which is different from the other tribes. To this, they were able to differentiate themselves from the others thereby achieving favorable comparison during interethnic encounters. Moreover, ethnolinguistic communities have adopted honorific styles in different dialect or language. This is a display of assimilation from the influence of the community. Such practice is a manifestation in establishing positive identity to take favorable comparison. However, despite of this, the ethnolinguistic communities managed to make it as their own and still be able to accentuate other honorific styles from their own dialect.

This practice is an articulation of convergence accommodation by Giles (2016) that manifested a communication style wherein people enhance similarities during the interaction. It could happen during interethnic encounters where members of the tribe wish to assume positive identity by adopting various strategies. These strategies include accentuating and attenuating their own language. However, despite the demand of the society, the members of the tribe have not eventually assimilated to a different language but instead have adopted the new honorifics and make it as their own while retaining their own honorific styles in their own dialect.

**Table 1:** Kinship appellative honorifics

Ethnolinguistic Community	Honorific	Meaning
Mandaya	Ompo	Grandfather, Grandmother
	Babo, Lagina	Auntie
	Bapa	Uncle
	Kimud	youngest of the family
	Panganay	eldest of the family
	Ama	Father
	Ina	Mother
	Anakon	niece or nephew
	Ig-agaw	cousin
	Baklog	husband

	Katuyag	wife
	Anak	son/daughter
Kagan	Babo	Auntie
	Bapa	Uncle
	Ama	Father
	Ina	Mother
	Kaka	Kuya or Ate
	Ompo	Grandfather of Grandmother
	Ompo na Bubay	Grandmother
	Ompo na Usog	Grandfather
Mansaka	Bapa	Uncle, Usog
	Babo	Auntie, Bobay
	Manong	brother, eldest male
	Manang	sister, eldest female
	Papa	Father
	Mama	Mother
	Ompo	Grandfather

**Sub-kinship appellative honorifics**

The data that were collected showed the honorific styles of *Bi, Uto, Bobay, Usog, Ikaduha na Ina, Ikaduha na Ama, Itin, Dodong, Boyag, Bagong Utaw, Baklog, Idi, Isu*, and *Atog*. These are honorific styles that are non-relative terms, but it may also be addressed with terms of relationship consistent with the study of Min et al (Min et al., 2016). Honorific styles of the ethnolinguistic communities validate the claim of Abdulazziz and Mohammad (2020) that sub-kinship terms are the ones referred to parent’s close friends. The results also confirm the claims of Izadi (2015) in which diverse culture and language create complex identity. Thus, the ethnolinguistic communities were able to put up a system of communicating respect to the community. However, the results negate Siswandi and Setiawan’s (2018) claim in which the politeness that has been valued by the group is influenced by the many cultural influences that was formed outside the group.

The results suggest that each tribe were able to accentuate their language and have developed psycholinguistic distinctiveness among the tribe. Members of the tribe have made a personal decision to use their own honorific styles when there is interethnic encounter. As reflected on the results, the ethnolinguistic communities were able to retain their own honorific styles despite the influence. Such is a manifestation that ethnolinguistic community has considered language, honorific styles, as very important for it subjectively and strongly identified them as members of the group.

This practice confirms the convergence accommodation of Giles (2016) in which speakers adapt to the language use or communication actions to converge with the society. This was done by applying cognitive alternatives for social acceptability. Based on the investigation, instead of attenuating the ethnolinguistic communities’ language they make cognitive alternatives to involve themselves in the society making it their own social identity. And this social identity that they are making accentuate not only their language but also the group as well because they are not just sharing their identity but also creating a relationship to the society.

**Table 2:** Sub-kinship appellative honorifics

Ethnolinguistic Community	Honorific	Meaning
Mandaya	Bi	Inday
	Uto	Dodong
	Bobay	girl/woman
	Usog	boy/man
	Ikaduha na Ina	Godmother
	Ikaduha na Ama	Godfather
Kagan	Itin	respect to male
	Bi or Bhe	respect to female
	Dodong	closed loved one
	Boyag	female
	Bagong Utaw	youth, adolescent
Mansaka	Baklog	elderly, senior citizen, based on age
	Boyag	elderly female
	Itin	male (no need to mention the name)
	Idi	female (no need to mention the name)
	Isu	for everyone who is a child, no age requirement
	Atog	elderly male
	Bobay	female
	Usog	male



**Rank appellative honorifics**

The data that were collected showed the honorific styles of *Datu*, *Bia*, *Matikadung*, *Baylan*, *Babalyanon*, *Matadung*, *Pyagmatikadung*, *Pyagmatikadungan*, *Gibobayan*, *Pyagtawpan*, and *Pyagtawpan ng Bangsa*. These are honorific styles that refer to official ranks often used to address a person who are in certain social status which are found to be consistent with the study of Min et al. (2016). The results confirm the claim of Yeboah et al. (2021) in which honorific styles were ascribed to an addressee based on his/her power or the social class, age, profession, gender, and other. And that power-based honorifics are always asymmetric and nonreciprocal, precisely, because these are honorific styles ascribed to Tribal Leaders of Tribal Chieftains of the ethnolinguistic communities. The only difference is that these honorific styles are also influenced by the tribe’s culture which showed the uniqueness of the other rank appellative honorifics compared to another tribe. Because of culture influence, each tribe also had different application of the honorific styles. This is an excellent example of accentuating not only their language but also of the ethnolinguistic communities’ culture to the society. It is their social identity despite of the numerous identity-related choices they encounter; they choose to be who they are.

Moreover, the rank honorific style is a manifestation of the ethnolinguistic communities’ upholding the sacredness of their leaders while establishing positive social identity. This instantiates that language and ideology are closely connected to each other which can be then attributed to the claim of Park (2021) which posits that ideologies of politeness govern the language choice and claim membership in each ethnolinguistic community. Such act confirms the divergence accommodation of Giles (2016) in which speakers emphasize the contrast of their honorific styles. Consequently, it exposes group identification and a chance for the ethnolinguistic community to accentuate their identity in society.

**Table 3i:** Rank appellative honorifics

Ethnolinguistic Community	Honorific	Meaning
Mandaya	Bia	women leader
	Datu	men leader
	Matikadung	elders of the tribe who are experts of culture and tradition
	Baylan	traditional healer/priest
	Babalyanon	not a full pledge Balyan, in-training
Kagan	Datu or Pyagmatikadung	highest leader, well respected, wisest, highest judge, and arbiter.
	Pyagmatikadungan	group of Matikadung, council of leaders
	Bia or Gibubayan	female leader
	Matikadung	respected elder
	Pyagtawpan	pure royal blood
Mansaka	Pyagtawpan ng Bangsa	both parents are of royal blood line
	Matadung	highest leader
	Matikadung or Pyagmatikadung	group of Matikadung, leader of the federation
	Datu	Male leader
	Bia	Female leader

**Aged appellative honorifics**

The data that were collected showed the honorific styles of *Boyag* and *Utaw*. These are honorific styles widely used in everyday conversation to form direct and indirect terms of address for the sake of respect confirming the study of Min et al. (2016). The result also validates the claim of Keating and Duranti (2016) that honorifics provide evidence of how members of communities make, moment by moment, linguistic choices that organize important social distinctions.

The honorific styles when used by the ethnolinguistic communities have provided them the avenue to establish their social identity and psycholinguistic distinctiveness even if it is for the sake of showing respect. Thus, when used, it automatically identifies their membership to the group. Moreover, establishing interpersonal relationship and communication among social groups are very important. The honorific style of aged serves as modification strategy to obtain the effect of respect. Consequently, this move confirms the divergence accommodation of Giles (2016) in which they emphasize the difference in their language towards others. However, the use of these honorific styles reveals their ethnolinguistic identity to society.

**Table 4:** Aged appellative honorifics

Ethnolinguistic Community	Honorific	Meaning
Mandaya	Boyag	Elderly, woman
Mansaka	Utaw	male or female

**Professional appellative honorifics**

The data that were collected showed the honorific styles of *Bagani, Kawbayan, Baraguwa, Midtud, Kaksi, Santuri, Bangkumuni, Arid sa Pintu, Nakuda, Kuwano, Balyan, Kaubayan, Panakawan, Masirataw, Matababay, Babalyanon, Kyalalaysan, Kabobayan, and Giboyagan*. These honorific styles refer to professional titles or set of honorific terms of direct address to people of various professions confirming the study of Min et al. (2016). Moreover, the use of the honorific styles of the ethnolinguistic communities corroborates the study of Abdulaziz and Mohammad (2020) that professional appellative honorifics are certain profession that can be used as titles. These titles are distinct to every ethnolinguistic community wherein roles are also connected to them. Consequently, it sets the identity of the tribe where professionalism and responsibility are one. Such distinctiveness has identified the membership of the tribe where language is the symbol of their identity.

Moreover, the results also suggest that the ethnolinguistic communities have established their respective Indigenous Political Structure (IPS) which is very significant to the tribe. The IPS was conceptualized in confirmation with the National Commission for the Indigenous People (NCIP) to be recognized as a tribe (IPS, 2019). This accomplishment is a manifestation of the tribe’s commitment to put their identity in the society. It is a tedious process from what the participants relayed but to them it was all worth it. The IPs seek to promote order, maintain security, and advance the development of the tribe communities, the level of leadership structure, pattern of authority, and methods of dispensing law as essential to good governance. It is apparent that the ethnolinguistic communities had built their ethnolinguistic vitality in place. Such move of the ethnolinguistic communities is in conformity with Giles’ (2016) divergence accommodation. This suggest that speakers emphasized their identity in the society by using their own honorifics in their own dialect. Such emphasis on their language reveals the contrast of their identity to the other group.

**Table 5:** Professional appellative honorifics

Ethnolinguistic Community	Honorific	Meaning
Mandaya	Bagani	warrior
	Kawbayan	serve and assist the Bia
Kagan	Baraguwa	officials
	Midtud	overall in-charge of the council
	Kaksi	Secretary
	Santuri	Treasurer
	Bangkumuni	Messenger
	Arid sa Pintu	in-charge of crowd control
	Nakuda	Sitio leader
	Kuwano	warrior
	Balyan	healer, priest, doctor, and adviser
	Kaubayan	women of the community
	Panakawan	Pyagmatikadung’s leader
	Masirataw	property custodian
	Matababay	food tasters
	Mansaka	Balyan
Babalyanon		practicing Balyan
Kyalalaysan		based on their knowledge, it’s in the grandparent’s blood line. If the balyan cannot handle the Kyalalaysan is there.
Kabobayan		group of female, wife of the Bagani
Bagani		Secondary Datu
Giboyagan		wife of the Pyagmatikadung

**No naming appellative honorifics**

The data that were collected showed the honorific styles of *Ina ni \_\_\_\_\_, Ama ni \_\_\_\_\_, Papa ni \_\_\_\_\_, and Mama ni \_\_\_\_\_*. These honorific styles refer to forms of address that are often omitted, especially among close friends and relatives confirming the study of Min et al., (2016). The results illustrated the ethnolinguistic communities’ importance of their leader. They recognized their leader’s significance by placing their identity in the community. They are, foremost, their language and culture bearers. Thus, high respect is afforded to them. Moreover, consistent with Min et al.’s (2016) result of the study which claimed that these are terms used to address but omitted. Despite the lack of honorifics, the level of respect is maintained. However, the context of the ethnolinguistic communities is very different to that of the study of Min et al. in 2016 since the ethnolinguistic communities, only accompanies ideologies which they can understand. Thus, not naming their leader is a sign of superior respect.

In the same way, when honorific style is used during interethnic encounter, the ethnolinguistic communities signify their accentuation of ingroup speech style to the extent that they identify themselves subjectively and strongly as

members of the group. Consequently, the act confirms the convergence accommodation of Giles (2016) wherein speakers adapt to other group’s communication actions to establish social acceptability.

Table 5: No naming appellative honorifics

Ethnolinguistic Community	Honorific	Meaning
Mandaya	Ina ni _____, Ama ni _____	Name of the Datu or Bia is not mentioned as a sign of respect. Only the name of his eldest daughter or son is mentioned.
Kagan	Ina ni _____ or Ama ni _____	Not allowed to directly call the leader using his/her name but instead, the leader will be called using the name of his/her eldest son.
Mansaka	Papa ni _____ or Mama ni _____	Name of the Datu or Bia is not mentioned as a sign of respect. Only the name of his eldest daughter or son is mentioned.

**Identity honorifics**

The data that were collected showed the honorifics of *Maumpid*, *Dagkumo*, *Masandag*, *Dailaw*, *Nanganinaw*, and *Digabunan*. These are honorific style which reflects or describes individual’s characteristics, traits, and attitude as experienced by the *Balyan* or *Baylan* in their constant interaction during rituals. The above results suggest that the ethnolinguistic communities have rich culture and language. These honorific styles are not from the word bank of the tribe but from the wisdom of the *Balyan* or *Baylan*. Only then that the priest gave the meaning of the honorifics that the tribe have deeper understanding why one was bestowed with such. This practice is in conformance with Karimov (2022) study of the Uzbek people where the endowment of names is based on the motivation of national customs, traditions, and values. An infant was given the names of heavenly bodies, animals, birds, fruit and ornamental trees, and flowers which is an expression of the desire, intention, aspirations of children to be hardened, mature, strong, strong, energetic, courageous, valued, respected.

Consequently, it is an illustration that the ethnolinguistic communities had rooted their identity and membership in the society. This exemplified the tribe’s social identity recognizing their language as the important symbol of their identity. Moreover, the honorific styles have found that linguistic and cultural ideologies are not divorced from social infrastructures (Fleming, 2016). In addition, the use of the honorific styles is an illustration that the tribe accentuate their identity to the society. Subsequently, this confirms Giles (2016) divergence accommodation as the group emphasized their language and the differences of identity to the society. Because of the ethnolinguistic communities’ awareness of their status in the society they have conceived honorific style specific only to their group. Then such move improved their social identity. Their identity as ethnolinguistic community became sophisticated and superior.

Moreover, it is also a manifestation of the tribe in search of their identity not only to their own community but also to the society. This is a very significant step as this will determine the extent of which the tribe can build their community and accentuate their language and culture. Accordingly, when this honorific style is used during interethnic encounter, they signify their accentuation of ingroup speech style to the extent that they emphasize the difference in the honorific styles with the other ethnolinguistic communities.

Table 6: Identity honorifics

Ethnolinguistic Community	Honorific	Meaning
Mandaya	Maumpid	A person who brings people together.
	Dagkumo	A person who is firm and with principle in his authority.
	Masandag	Good looking person.
	Dailaw	I am the light of the people.
	Nanganinaw	A person who listens.
Mansaka	Masandag	Good looking person.
	Digabunan	A dignified leader with unwavering love and care for all.

**The grammatical markers**

The result suggests that the bound morpheme markers of *ma-*, *dag-*, *da-*, *pyag-*, *-an*, *gi-*, *ba-*, *-on*, *ka-*, and *di-*. These are markers developed because of proximity of the location of the ethnolinguistic communities that contributed to the similarities of affixes but with different meaning when used. This is exactly what Finegan (2008) mentioned of the patterned expressions accomplished in specific tasks in specific contexts. Because of the different contexts that each ethnolinguistic has, the words derived from the grammatical markers has specific meaning to be used in specific tasks.

KE5 narrated and claimed that they were the original settlers in the city. When the Moro came and they were Islamized, there are those who do not accept Islam, so they went to the *saka* now became Mansaka. Then others went to *daya* now became Mandaya. Others who were afraid and went upward now became *Dibabawon*. If they were more than afraid, they became *Aeta* because they were afraid to become Islam and they do not want to see people. This historical narration provided the idea why all three tribes used the same honorifics for their leader, *Datu* and *Bia*. The Mandaya, Kagan, and Mansaka are all connected to each other. They may have difference in their culture, but their origin is the same.

Moreover, bound morphemes are also called affixes, when attached to a free morpheme they can derive new words and meaning (Martini, 2016). Consequently, the above bound morphemes create varying semantic meaning which corroborates the claim of Finegan (2008). Even if all three tribes have the same markers, these markers do not guarantee that each word formed using the markers derived the same meaning equally for each tribe. This confirms the study of Arini (2016), Coleman Et al. (2020), and Yusri et al. (2020) in which all three authors claimed different semantic meaning in the grammatical markers. In the analysis of grammatical markers, reduplication existed as a linguistic approach to give emphasis and intensification of the description of the individual. Reduplication according to Boro and Baro (2019) is used in inflections to convey a grammatical function, such as plurality, intensification, and others, and in lexical derivation to create new words. The reduplication in the honorific styles provided the honorific effect as it emphasizes description of a person. As a result, it acted as an adjective that provides a clear picture when this honorific style be used.

This is consistent with the findings of Yeboah (2021) Akan honorific analysis in which names are adduced may be verbs, adjectives, or nouns manifested through the morphological processes. Moreover, it also confirms Karimov (2022) claim that word groups are not a phenomenon with a fixed border in language, words tend to gravitate towards one lexical-grammatical category and execute their function because of the ongoing movement of language. Proximity in location affect the language similarities however, because of cultural values practiced by the different ethnolinguistic communities' differences in the markers also exist. Ultimately, there is also varying semantic meaning that can be derived in the union of the bound and free morphemes.

**Table 7:** Grammatical markers used to index honorific effect

Ethnolinguistic Community	Honorifics	Meaning	Grammatical Markers	
			Bound	free
Mandaya	<i>Maumpid</i> (noun)	A person who brings people together	<i>ma</i> (prefix – adjective marker)	<i>umpid</i> (verb-reconciles/fixes)
	<i>Dagkumo</i> (noun)	A person who is firm and with principle in his authority	<i>dag</i> (prefix – there at)	<i>kumo</i> (noun - fist)
	<i>Masandag</i> (noun)	Good looking person	<i>ma</i> (prefix – adjective marker)	<i>sandag</i> (adjective -good looking)
	<i>Dailaw</i> (noun)	I am the light of the people.	<i>da</i> (prefix – me)	<i>ilaw</i> (noun - light)
	<i>Babalyanon</i> (noun)	Practicing <i>Balyan</i>	<i>ba-</i> (prefix-reduplication) on (suffix – active, neutral tense, object orientation)	<i>Balyan</i> (noun -priest)
Kagan	<i>Pyagmatikadung</i> (noun)	Male highest leader who is well respected, wisest, highest judge, and arbiter with people under his leadership.	<i>pyag</i> (prefix - active, completed tense, object, or referent orientation)	<i>Matikadung</i> (noun -respected leader)
	<i>Pyagmatikadungan</i> (noun)	Council of leaders composed of Matikadung	<i>pyag</i> (prefix - active, completed tense, object, or referent orientation) an (suffix – plural)	<i>Matikadung</i> (noun -respected leader)
	<i>Gibobayan</i> (noun)	A group of female leaders	<i>gi</i> (prefix- active, progressive tense, object, or associate) an (suffix-plural)	<i>bobay</i> (noun - woman)
	<i>Pyagtawpan</i> (noun)	A person whose parents have the royal blood line.	<i>pyag</i> (prefix - active, completed tense, object, or referent orientation) an (suffix-plural)	<i>Tawpan</i> (adjective -pure royal blood)
Mansaka	<i>Pyagmatikadung</i> (noun)	Referring to the leader of the	<i>pyag</i> (prefix- active, completed,	<i>Matikadung</i> (noun- respected leader)

		Matikadung or leader of the federation	referent orientation)	
	<i>Babalyanon</i> (noun)	practicing <i>Babyan</i>	<i>ba</i> (prefix-reduplication) on (suffix – active, neutral tense, object orientation)	<i>Balyan</i> (noun - religious leader)
	<i>Kabobayan</i> (noun)	They are the wife of a <i>Bagani</i> . Has the same role of a <i>Bagani</i> .	<i>ka</i> (prefix – stative, neutral tense, associate orientation) an (suffix – plural distributive)	bobay (noun - female)
	<i>Giboyagan</i> (noun)	Group of wives of the <i>Pyagmatikadung</i> .	<i>gi</i> (prefix – active progressive, tense, referent orientation) an (suffix – plural distributive)	<i>boyag</i> (noun - old woman)
	<i>Masandag</i> (noun)	Good looking person.	<i>ma</i> (prefix – adjective marker)	<i>sandag</i> (adjective - good looking)
	<i>Digabunan</i> (noun)	She is a dignified leader with unwavering love and care for all.	<i>di</i> (prefix – active progressive tense, object or associate orientation) an (suffix – plural distributive)	<i>gabun</i> (noun - fog, cloud – as obscuring the side of a mountain)

## 5. Conclusion

The result suggests that the extant honorific styles of noun appellatives of the ethnolinguistic communities are Kinship, Sub-kinship, Rank, Aged, Professional, and No Naming consistent with the study of Min et al. (2016). However, another honorific came up in the investigation, the identity honorifics. Identity honorifics reflects the identity and culture of the ethnolinguistic community influenced by their ideologies, beliefs, and attitude expressed in their language as aligned with Park’s (2022) study.

In like manner, bound morphemes exist in the honorifics styles that index the honorific effect. These markers are *ma-*, *dag-*, *da-*, *pyag-*, *-an*, *gi-*, *-on*, *ka-*, *di-*, and *ba-* reflect the identity of the person endowed with the honorific style which corroborates to Arini’s (2016) description of grammatical markers. Furthermore, the findings could be used as a guide in taking necessary action in relation to the City Tribal Council's information education campaign for the youth IPs. Specifically, the explicit teaching of each ethnolinguistic community's appropriate honorific styles. Finally, the study's findings provide information about the language and culture of ethnolinguistic communities, as well as their cultural identity and socio-cultural awareness, which will guide schools, government and non-government institutions, and private institutions in their understanding of honorific styles.

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