Labeling and Identity Construction in Teenagers

Dwi Wulandari

Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University, Semarang 50275, Indonesia
dwiwulandari@lecturer.undip.ac.id

Abstract. Labeling is particular term used to refer someone to particular references or meaning. It is part of identity construction as by giving and accepting label, people are putting themselves on categories. Labeling is quite common used by people, especially those of teenagers. This study is designed to reveal the form and function of labeling used by *santris* of MBI AU Mojokerto as the markers of their identity construction. The subjects of the study are 152 *santris* MBI AU grade XI and XII both males and females. Data is collected from their chat in their whats-app groups, their public communication such during their performance as informal master of ceremony in events, and in their communication books. Sampling is taken purposively based on the purpose of the study, which then analyzed descriptively. The study finds that there are five types of label used by *santris;* role reference, human nature reference, new nickname, others reference, and label for place. Those label functions in different ways based on the contexts, such as showing their real nature, to distinct themselves form common typicality addressed to them, to make a joke, and to include someone in their community.

Keywords: Labeling, Identity Construction, *Santris*, MBI AU

1   Introduction

One of clear indications of identity construction is the labeling on categories or group of people. This identity marker is meant to put the people or person given the label in particular categories, thus creates the borders for intersubjectivity [2][3]. Though basically labeling can have positive or negative meaning, theoretically, most labelings are referred to negative behaviors [9]. In a complex society, giving label to particular person or people may have significant consequences, as giving particular label may create alienation for those people given label, as can be seen from Raybeck's studies on people in Kelantan [9], which in the end may create the stereotyping on particular group of people. Such unfortunate stereotyping occurs on many examples, one of which is Saami tribes who creates labels for different categories in their community, hence creating in-ideal community structure [1].

Labeling can be based on many different categories. Saami tribes, for example, base their labeling on the role people played in the community [1]. Other communities may put labels on people based on their place of origin, as in the communities of Dayak Kalimantan [14], or based on self-labeling with references of things or traits [10]. It may also refer to language or other cultural markers [8].

Teenagers are familiar with labeling, as they are also familiar with other name calling such as giving nick name or even cursing [13][9][15], hence it is interesting to reveal how teenagers, including santris, create labeling that may lead to intersubjectivity. As particular type of teenagers, santris who spend their youth life in pesantren may have a different type of behaviors as a result of particular thought and values taught to them. This different behavior may lead to a different type of name calling, labeling or such, hence it is interesting to dwell further on how santris create labeling. This study is conducting to reveal how *santri Madrasah bertaraf Internasional Amanatul Ummah* (MBI AU) create labeling and put meanings to them.

2   Methods

This descriptive qualitative study is conducted at MBI AU, a high-school level of *pesantren* in Mojokerto. The respondents are 77 *santris* of grade XI and XII both female and males. Data are taken from their chats from their whats-app groups, their performance as MC or speech on their events, and also from written communication they have called *bukom.* In addition, interview is also conducted to clarify some of the data. The data are collected during the period of October 2022 - July 2023. The purposive sampling is taken to see how these *santris* create labeling and put meanings to it.

3   Result and Discussion

Santris in this study are grouped into six categories: Males *santris* from regions speaking East Javanese dialect (MJT), females santris from regions speaking East Javanese dialect (FJT), males *santris* from regions speaking Javanese other than East Javanese dialect (MNJT), males *santris* from regions speaking Javanese other than East Javanese dialect (FNJT), male *santris* from regions not speaking Javanese language (MNJ), and male santris from regions not speaking Javanese language (FNJ).

Santris MBI AU use labeling as references in which particular person can be associated or categorized [9][14] [2]). The data show that there are five references of labels created by santris MBI AU : labeling based on role [1], based on human nature [9], based on other references (things/animals) [2], labeling place [14] and labeling as the nick-name [1]. The details can be seen in the following table

Table 1. The references of labeling used by *santris* MBI AU

Labeling		Ade	Dist	Authen	Denat	Autho	Ille
Based on role	Private	-	-	4/0/1/1/ 0/0	-	0/0/0/0/ 1/0	-

	Publik	-	-	2/0/1/0/0/0	-	-	-
Based on human nature	Private	0/2/0/0/1/0	10/7/0/3/1/1	0/2/0/0/0/0	1/2/0/1/0/0	0/3/0/0/1/0	0/0/0/1/0/0
	Publik	-	3/0/0/0/0/0	1/3/0/0/0/0	-	-	-
Based on references on things/animals	Private	-	4/5/0/02/0	0/4/0/0/1/0	0/0/0/2/1/0	0/0/0/0/1/0	-
	Publik	1/0/0/0/0/0	0/0/0/0/0/1	0/5/0/0/0/0	-	-	-
New nick-name	Private	-	-	2/1/1/0/1/0	-	-	-
	Publik	-	-	1/1/1/0/0/0	-	0/1/0/0/0/0	-
Labeling for place	Private	1/1/1/0/0/0	0/0/0/1/0/0	1/0/0/0/0/0	-	-	-
	Publik	-	-	3/1/0/0/0/0	-	-	-

Note : Ade : adequation   Dist : distinction
    Authen : Authentication Denat : denaturalization
    Autho : Authorization   Ille : illegitimation

Table 1 shows distribution of MJT, FJT, MNJT, FNJT, MNJ, and FNJ respectively on their use of labeling. The most number of the labeling occurs in labeling with the reference of human nature and references based on things/animals, with the relationality of authentication and distinction being the most, suggesting that most of labeling are part of *santris'* real identity and some others are showings how *santris* wants to be reckoned distinctively from the common perception of either being *santris* or teenagers in general. Small number of other relationalities shows that at particular context *santris* may show particular attitudes and behaviors.

a) Labeling based on role

Labeling based on role are done mostly by male *santris*, only one data of labeling found from female data (FNJT). Most of labeling are done by MJT due the fact that this group of *santris* outnumbers the other groups. These role-based labelings are referred to the role they have as part of managements in students' organization or their roles in particular committees, such as **anak dekor, arek acara, anak dokpub, pentolan, koor, anak bedbuk (anak bedah buku), penggalang dana inti** and **notulis.** There is no differences on how *santris* from different categories use such labeling, due to the fact that such labeling applies to the whole community and that those labeling are created by *santris* themselves. Therefore, almost all role-based labeling show relationality of authentication, and only one datum shows relationality of authorization as it is used as the representation of the other *santris*.

Though such labeling does not suggest derogatory meaning, female *santris* tend to avoid using them to label their friends. They tend to keep their relations equal, as by giving them label, they feel as if they were putting particular people on hierarki, and they don't like that (interview Delila, Bunga).

b) Labeling with the reference to human nature.

Labeling with reference to human nature is the one mostly used by *santris,* both females and males. Those are **gaje, cool, alay, dol, tolol, bamble, ndeng, boy, wong alim, kudet, mbah-mbah, blok, jamet, kowa kowo, nggembel, anak sholehah, bar bar, gaada akhlak** in private context. Almost all data from private context show derogative meaning of labeling usage, as it is commonly done in labeling study [1][10]. Many of these labelings show relationality of distinction, as *santris* are using such labelings to distinct themselves from the stereotyping of *santris*. Such labelings also show particular sense of jokes, hence they contribute to maintain the relationship, as for *santris* maintaining relationship is one form of brotherhood valued at pesantren tradition (interview Mufid, Aryo).

In public context, different types of labelings are used by *santris,* such as **generasi revolusi, perantau pemberi suri tauladan,** and **berdedikasi,** which is addressed to their teachers and seniors. Such labelings do not have derogative meaning, instead they have positive meaning, obviously because it is uttered in public context where passive participants need to be considered. Such positive labeling is considered as part of *santris'* way in studying by putting resepect, not only to the teacher's personally but also to the knowledge they give [5]. Another labels such as **bestie** and **sahabat limolas** which have more neutral meaning are used to label their friends. Some popular slang words such as **alay**, and **mbois** are also used by *santris* as labels to show their crossing to the popular slang words identified as Jawa Timuran people. *Santris* use **wong alim** and **anak sholehah** to show relationalization of denaturalization, as they used it as satire which carries sense of jokes [2].

The non Javanese speaking *santris* are also using some of such labeling such as **mbambleh** and **kowa kowo**. Mbambleh is a particular slang word in East Javanese dialect which means stupid looking of retarded person [7]. This word is popular word used by MBI santris, as popular as the word *kowa kowo* which means similarly (interview Bunga, Jihan). Therefor the use of such words by non-Javanese *santris* shows the relationality of adequation, that *santris* are crossing toward the utterances that are familiar in the context [4].

c) Labeling with reference to others (things/animals)

Similar to labeling with reference to human nature, labeling with reference to others also carries derogative meaning, such as **ngebo, lowo, babi, fir'aun, nyet, anjing, pawang boyo, setan, batu, dajjal, nyuk (munyuk), setan, asu** and **garangan**

jahanam. Most of those labeling refers to the actual meaning of what are being referred to. For example, *ngebo* is used to mark lazines, *lowo* is used to label those who stay up all night, *fir'aun* is used to mark arrogance, *dajjal* is used to label those who give misleading information, pawang boyo is used to mark popular girl who is liked by many male *santris,* while *setan, asu, garangan jahanam* is used to mark other than their friends.

Many of those labeling are said by Javanese speakers both from East Javanese and non East Javanese dialect, and most of which show the realization of distinction, marked by the sense of jokes carried by the context, in a way that *santris* wants to be acknowledged differently as the common *santris'* stereotype. Only some show relationality of authentication as in the case of labeling *asu* and *garangan jahanam* which is used to label corona disease. However, other labels such as **wibu** and **sejarah** show the relationality of authentication as they refer to the persons as they are; the one who love, read and draw *wibu* and the one who love history course respectively. There is also a label of **gus** addressed to *santris*. As Gus is a label referred only to the son of Kyai, hence giving such label to common *santris* creates relationality of denaturalization as it is used as satire and jokes [2].

As in labeling with the reference of human nature, here, *santri* also used different types of labelings in public context, **Ilahi sebagai dasar pertahanan diri, Nabi muhammad sang pemberi ketenangan**, **Kyai sebagai sang pelopor, inspirator dan motivator**, **al Qur'an sang pengikat ketakwaan** which all have positive meaning not only because they are said in public context but also because they are label for God, Prophet Muhammad, Kyai, and Al Qur'an. Similar to such labelings in private context, these labelings also refer to the actual meanings of what are being referred to.

d) Labeling with new nick-name

Giving nick name is a common phenomenon in teenagers' communication. Santris MBI AU also give nick names for individual person and also for group. The examples for individual nick name are **munyuk, pewe, rrr, illmen, inem,** or **ianjing.** Such namings show relationality of authentication as such names are accepted by the interlocutors and are used as communication [6]. It should be noted that the nick naming only created by males santris, and though they seem derogative, some of them are made related to the owner of the names. For example munyuk and pewe are introducing themselves with that nick name, rrr is referred to Aqil who according to their friends are able to pronounce the sound r clearly, illmen is from ilman, inem is from inam, and ianjing is from Ian. Hence the last three nick names are the convenience way of sound-play which in the end create sense of jokes, as this type of jokes are important for male *santris* to keep the sense of brotherhoods [12]

For group nick name, they create **wolvastrone, streivenstare, socious overdose, gen 15** that are used to name their class or batch as a whole. Group nick names are created based on discussion and are used by both male and female *santris.*

e) Labeling place

Santris MBI AU also use labeling for place such as **ndeso** and **ndarjo** to refer to the place where they come from, desa 'village' and Sidoarjo respectively. They use **keluarga** and **rumah** to refers to generasi 15; the friendships they have as a whole, and they use **miniatur kehidupan** dan **penjara suci,** and **kawah candra dimuka to refer to pesantren** where they stay**.**

4   Conclusion

Santris MBI AU are giving labels differently based on how the labels are addressed. They give labels with derogative meanings to their peers and within private context. The labels with positive meaning are either addressed to those older than them or given at public context. Male *santris* are having more derogative labels compared to females, including the fact that only male *santris* give new nick name with derogative meaning. The higher sense of brotherhood is considered as the main reason behind such acts. Most of the derogative meaning labels show the relationality of distinction in a way that santris MBI AU want to seen differently as the stereotype of santri in general. There are not much differences between Javanese speakers of East Javanese dialect and non East Javanese dialect, however, the non Javanese speakers are using more crossing to adapt themselves and to be sounded more like the Javanese speakers.

References

1. Anderson, M.: Proper names, naming, and labeling in Saami. Anthropological Linguistics. **26** (2). p. 186 - 201.(1984)
2. Bucholtz, M & Hall, K.: Identity and interaction: a sociocultural linguistic approach. Discourse Studies. **7** (4/5).p. 585 - 614. (2005)
3. Djenar, D.N., Ewing, M.C., & Manns, H.: Style and Intersubjectivity in Youth Interaction. De Gruyter. (2018)
4. Goebel, Z.: Identity and social conduct in a transient multilingual setting. Language in Society. **39**(2) pp. 203-240 (2010)
5. Ismah, N.: Print media and cultural identity of santri: Responses of the pesantren's young leaders in Indonesia. Dinika: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies. **1** (3). p. 243-262.(2016)
6. Jaffe, A.: Introduction : The sociolinguistics of stance. In Stance: Sociolinguistics Perspectives. Allexandra Jaffe (ed). Oxford University Press. p. 3 - 28. (2009)
7. Kamus remaja lengkap. https://kamusremajalengkap.blogspot.com/2016/05/penjelasan-tentang-arti-kata-gaul_429.html.(2016)

8. Kuter, L.:Labeling people: Who are the Bretons? Anthropological Quarterly. **58** (1) p. 13 - 29. (1985)
9. Manns, H.: 'Address terms, framing and identity in Indonesian youth interaction'. In, Youth language in Indonesia and Malaysia. Dwi Noverini Djenar (ed.). NUSA **58**: 73-93. (2015)
10. Raybeck, D.: Anthropology and labeling theory: A constructive critique. *Etos.* **16** (4). p. 371 - 397 (1988)
11. Langub, J.: Ethnic self-labeling of the Murut or "Lun Bawang" of Serawak. Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in South Asia. **2** (2). p. 289 – 299 (1987)
12. Lukens-Bull, R.A.:Teaching Morality: Javanese Islamic Education in a Globalizing Era. Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies. **3**. p.26 - 47 (2000)
13. Smith-Hefner, N.: Youth language, gaul sociability and the new Indonesian middle class. Journal of Linguistics Anthropology **17**(2). 184–203 (2007)
14. Wadley, RL.: Reconsidering an ethnic label in Borneo the 'Maloh' of "West Kalimantan, Indonesia. Bijdraged tot de Taal -, Land - en Volkenkunde. **156** (1). p. 83 - 101. (2000).
15. Wulandari, D., Santosa, R., Djatmika, Rais, W.A.: Santris' selves positioning through their use of affective stance markers. In International Proceedings on International Seminar SEMANTIKS & PRASASTI (2023)