

# Term of Address to Differentiate Familiarity in Sundanese

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## ABSTRACT

Verbal communication in an interaction has many subtle messages sent along with the exact words coming out of participants. Through it all there are distinct social situation that can be discerned. It determines social situation as an important part in the language being used. It regulates who says what to whom; where and when it is spoken, in what setting and so on. This study aims to identify and describe how Sundanese speakers keep their face or distance from their partners by using terms of address at Sundanese speech level. This study adopted qualitative descriptive research methods. The data were collected by content analysis and focus group discussion technique. This study shows that in a formal situation such as classroom, the terms of address used during the conversation between a lecturer, assistant lecturer, and students are classified as polite (*lemes*) terms of address in the Sundanese system.

**Keywords:** Social distance, Speech level, Sundanese, Terms of address.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Culture and language are two closely related entities like two sides of a coin; they are different but cannot be separated. This can be seen from the many phenomena and realities showing the relation between language and culture. One of them is how people show the value of politeness in language (Terkouraf, 2015).

When we shift our focus to language, it is usually on the language use, rather than the language structure; the way it is constructed, particularly the linguistic rules that govern the permissible (i.e. grammatically) usage forms. Language is defined as an abstract set of principles that specify the relation between a sequence of sounds and a sequence of meanings. Meanwhile, language also integrates its social life into its forms and structures. As a medium for the transmission of cultural knowledge and the primary means by which we gain access to the contents of others' mind, language is implicated in most of the phenomena that lie at the core of social psychology such as attitude change, social perception, personal identity, social interaction, intergroup bias and stereotyping, attribution, and so on. In social

psychological research, more often than not, language plays a role in both stimulus and response (Krauss and Chi-Yue Chiu, 2013). On the other hand, expert see language from a different perspective, such as Brown and Lavinson as quoted by Basar in 2019 who reveals three variables affecting politeness in language, one of which is social distance. In this respect, social distance is considered as how social attributes—such as age, social class, and ethnic background—affect a person's relationship with other persons (Holmes, 2013). This relationship is seen in the use of a person's speech level towards his or her participants in the interaction. Speech level in language shows a degree of politeness. It is important for them to be familiar with it in order to be able to appropriately speak to one another. In Indonesian culture, younger people are expected to show politeness to older people. On the other hand, older people are expected to respect younger people. This politeness is reflected in the speech level.

In summary, a person's politeness affects the use of speech level reflected in the choice of language element that shows social distance. A variety of articles have discussed the matter of language politeness, speech level,

social distance, and Sundanese (Basar, 2019; Rahmawati, 2012; Hastuti, 2018; Ardiati, Johana, & Hikmatasadi, 2019). However, these articles do not specifically focus on the use of Sundanese speech level to look into whether these used of the term of address in the specific interaction determine any social distance between lecturers and students.

Along these lines of arguments, the current study are focused in reviewing the politeness of language based on the Sundanese speech level in the interaction between a lecturer, a assistant lecturer, and students in a class interaction setting.

### 1.1 Research Question

Based on the argument above, it is important to look into the issue of how terms of address in Sundanese speech level are used to indicate politeness and keep a social distance among speakers. The driving questions for this study are:

- (1) What are the terms of address used based on speech level and politeness in an interaction?
- (2) How do Sundanese speakers keep their face or distance from their partners in interaction?

### 1.2 Objective of the Study

Considering the above questions, this study aims to:

- (1) identify the terms of address used according to speech level and politeness maxims;
- (2) explain strategies of keeping face or distance from their partners of speech.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Previous Studies

Term of address have been studied by a variety of scholars such as Fitriani, 2014; Erni, 2016; Sari and Zamzani, 2020; Rahmadani and Wahyuni, 2018. They discussed about the identification, usage, shifts, and the translation of terms of address. The languages involved are Sundanese, Indonesian, Javanese, Tolaki, and English. Some researchers focus on terms of address usages, and some also discussed their translations. The terms of address languages here vary from Sasak, Bimanese, Balinese, English, Indonesian, Padangnese, Selayere, and Javanese.

These researches on terms of address, have yet to look into the rarely researched Sundanese. This language is spoken by 34 million people residing in the western part of Java island as well the area of Lampung in the southern part of Sumatra. The location is the closest to Jakarta, the capital city, considered as a melting pot of Indonesia. As the closest area to the capital city, it is not impossible that

Sundanese language existence will be influenced by the many social occurrence in those area, showing us the importance of the position of the Sundanese language.

In this research, variation of aspects of formality are to be used, namely: power, distance and rank of imposition. These three aspects often apply to interpersonal relationships (Scoilon, 2001) which correspond to the relationship between speech actors in the data. These social factors are realized in three systems of politeness, namely: Deference, Solidarity and Hierarchy.

Based on the honorific marker element, terms of address previously described, the researchers are using a socio-pragmatic approach that combines sociolinguistic and pragmatic elements. The use of a socio-pragmatic approach is deemed appropriate as the nature of this approach looks in details specifically at a cultural nuance. Terms of address are cultural products which represents politeness (Prayitno, 2017). As previously explained, with the socio-pragmatic approach, the elements that will be studied are who is talking, who is being talked to, when the conversation occurs, in what situation, for what, and how the conversation occurs.

### 2.2 Politeness and Speech Level in Sundanese

People apply norms, customs, habits, conventions and cultures that have been mutually agreed upon in an interaction, embodied in the language elements used. Having the ability to recognise these elements makes it easy to understand the function of language use in society. Politeness is represented by language functions that can be observed in daily practice.

The politeness system is described as a social attitude which is influenced by the principles and norms adopted in a culture. Politeness is also defined as the ability of speech actors to show respect, wisdom and goodwill. The term 'face' with regard to politeness is defined as 'a public self-image of a person'. The use of the term face provides a change in the definition of politeness: 'awareness of another person's face '. The point of this definition is that face is related to social distance and familiarity (distance) Yule, 1996.

Distance (distance) refers to the relationship between individual speech actors. Speech actors who have fraternal relationship can be said to have no distance. Distance permits people to speak formally. This aspect of formality is involved in what many authors have interpreted as the formal event's emphasis on social distance (as opposed to intimacy) and respect (for an established order of social positions and identities) Irvine, 1992.

Apart from distance, power will be developed when the speech actors have different hierarchical positions; one has higher power than the other due to hierarchical differences. The owner of the power will show his power

by using appropriate expressions. Meanwhile, those who have less power than others, will use an expression appropriate to their position. Another factor that can influence the choice of expressions that show the level of politeness is the rank of Imposition. This factor refers to how heavy the burden is borne by the speaker while conveying his meaning. The weight of this burden is assumed to be one of the factors that influence the choice of words showing the degree of politeness.

Politeness is closely related to social distance or closeness. The politeness is oriented towards social distance among the speakers, leading to respect and politeness. Intimate friendship and solidarity are oriented to maintaining distance or self-esteem/good name (Hastuti, 2018). Martin stated that the speech level system is determined by differences in age, gender, social position, and group membership (Wilian, 2006). Other literature discusses the speech level from the use of the terms of address. The speech level can be recognized from the words someone uses. For example, to a peer, a person might say thanks with a *makasih*, while to a person of higher social standing, he would completely say *terima kasih*. Brown and Lavinson argue that this term is used so that the speakers and their partners of speech do not "lose face" when interacting by adhering to existing social values. In consequence it could be said that speech level is closely related to politeness. Meanwhile, Ethelb (2015) maintains that politeness in everyday conversation means to convey respect, to be nice and to have a good manner with appropriate behaviour towards others in an interactional act. This aspect is achieved through a linguistic behaviour in communication with others to succeed in their conversational goals.

### 2.3 Terms of Address in Sundanese

Meanwhile, the Sundanese speech level is known as *lemes* speech level showing a high sense of politeness,

The followings are common Sundanese terms of address found practiced currently:

**Table 1.** Sundanese Terms of Address

No.	Indicated Person	Polite forms	Intimate
1	First person/speaker	Abdi, Sim kuring, Bapak, Ibu, Akang, Eneng, Nyai, Ujang	Kuring, uing, aing, urang, Akang, Eneng, Nyai, Ujang
2	Second person/speaker	Anjeun, Bapak, Ibu	Maneh, sia, silaing
3	Third person/speaker	Anjeuna, Bapak...., Ibu....., Nyi...., Neng...., Jang....	Manehna, Bapak...., Ibu....., Nyi...., Neng...., Jang....

Current terms of address in Sundanese vary in terms of not only the original words coming from Sundanese language, but also the ones derived from other languages, such as Indonesian, English, as well as Arabic. From Indonesian language, the use of 'saya' is often used by Sundanese people talking to their fellows. From Arabic, 'ukhti and akhwat' are used in Sundanese context. The

and *loma* level speech showing a low degree of politeness and has a high content of intimacy or familiarity (Rahmawati, 2012), (Yudibrata, 1989). The *lemes* speech level is usually used to talk to people who are not yet known, not so familiar, and older. Meanwhile, the *loma* level speech is used if the speaker and the speech partner already have familiarity. The use of the terms of address as the Sundanese speech level must follow the context of speech. For example, for people who are not known, has no kinship relation, and older, the Sundanese will greet the second Person as *anjeun*. This term is also used in a formal situation. However, for people who are already familiar, Sundanese people will greet them as *maneh*. The terms of address *maneh* is considered as rude or impolite when used in a formal context as it is an address used in daily conversation.

Addressing participants in interaction are embedded with terms of address which are used to attract people's attention, to show politeness, and to reveal social status. These terms of address are used both in oral and written communication [Esmæ'li, 2011]. However, these terms may be changed in different situations, for example, a friend may call us our nickname at home but using the deferential title in the office. It is also the case in Sundanese, where terms of address are used to show deference and comradeship. In this investigation, terms of address only referred to vocatives, how people address another directly and orally. To show deference, the terms Bapak may be shortened to Pak, Ibu shortened to Bu. They were usually used for people to show someone respects and maybe both in a formal and informal situation without taking age into account. These also are impacts of power and distance [Qin, 2008] where people who have higher social status is respected, and people who have just met is addressed politely. Therefore, it may be concluded that terms of address showing politeness are used either when there is a difference in social status or when the interlocutors are strangers [Qin].

influence of those different languages has enriching Sundanese are used in context.

### 3. METHOD

This study adopted qualitative descriptive research methods. The characteristics of this method provided results in the form of detailed descriptions fully and in-

depth explaining the reasons and processes of events describing Sundanese terms of address and words choice applied by a lecturer and his students in class.

### 3.1 Data Source

The data source in this research is the “Pengantar Ilmu Sastra I” (Introduction to Literature I) video of a conversation in Sundanese between a lecturer and his students in class. The video was chosen as data because it is suitable for the discussion topic of this study, presenting a lecturer and his students in classroom interaction.

### 3.2 Data Collection Technique

The data collection is taken from interaction recording, either picture, voice, or text, considered as document analysis or content analysis (Arikunto, 2009).

**Table 2.** Sundanese Terms of Address

Term of address	1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> Person	Singular/Plural	Choice of Word		Total
			Polite	Rude	
<i>Bapa</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> Person	Singular	12	-	12
<i>Abdi</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> Person	Singular	13	-	13
<i>Urang</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> Person	Plural	10	-	10
<i>Name</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> Person	Singular	1	-	1
<i>Bapa</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Person	Singular	34	-	34
<i>Name</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Person	Singular	5	-	5
<i>Hidep</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Person	Singular	5	-	5
<i>Hidep</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Person	Plural	34	-	34
<i>Bapa</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Person	Plural	4	-	4
<i>Name</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Person	Singular	8	-	8
<i>Bapa/Pa</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Person	Singular	16	-	16
<i>Anjeunna</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Person	Singular	3	-	3
Total			145	-	145

From the analysis of the conversation among a lecturer, assistant lecturer, and students in a class, it could be seen that their conversation has several characteristics, especially in the choice of terms of address, speech level, and attempt at social distance. By referring to research questions and analysis processes, the results can be summarized as follows:

#### 4.1 Terms of address

The choice of the terms of address used are based on specific considerations. This is so as the terms of address used has impact of communication that arises in the form of psychological, ethical, and social discomfort. In the Sundanese system, terms of address are divided into *lemes* and *loma*, which have to do with power, position (social status), and familiarity (solidarity), and the relationship between the roles of the speaker and the interlocutor (Sudaryat, 2015).

In collecting the data, this research adopted the content analysis technique. At the beginning of the research, the data were collected by watching the video and transcribing the utterances. Then, the data were entered into a table and analyzed based on the use of Sundanese terms of address and word choice in line with the use of the level speech in Sundanese.

The other technique adopted in this research is focus group discussion. The group discussed how to identify Sundanese terms of address according to the level of speech and describe the social distance in the data.

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following table demonstrates the use of Sundanese terms of address regarding the speech level in Sundanese in this study. The details are explained in the sub-headings.

**Table 3.** Terms of address *Bapa*

No	Sentence	Speaker
1	<i>Punten, Bapa bade naros.</i> (Could I ask you, please Sir?)	Student
2	<i>Muhun, hatur nuhun Bapa.</i> (Thank you, Sir.)	Student

The above data shows Sundanese politeness when the student (P1) communicates with the lecturer (P2) using the terms of address *Bapa*. In Sundanese, the word *Bapa* refers to an authoritative male figure for a family. Bestowing a similar amount of respect to a teacher shows respect and deference as he is also considered as an important figure in society as well as an authoritative figure in caring and raising children.

**Table 4.** Terms of address *Abdi*

No	Sentence	Speaker
1	<i>Abdi bade naros, Pa.</i> (I would like to ask, Sir.)	Student

Student (P1) uses *abdi* as a politeness term while addressing the lecturer (P2). Generally, in Sundanese, *abdi* is used to address an older person. One of the factors determining the usage of *abdi* is the generation gap between the entity and the anonymity among the individual in a formal situation. Hence, *abdi* is also used to show deference as a gesture of formal politeness and respect.

**Table 5.** Terms of address *Hidep*

No	Sentence	Speaker
1	<i>Cing, Bapa naros ka hidep, saha anu kantos maca novel?</i> (Let me ask <b>you</b> , who has read the novel?)	Lecturer
2	<i>Mangga hidep bilih aya patarosan deui sateuacan dipungkas parkualihanna.</i> (Before we end the class, if <b>you</b> still have any questions, please ask!)	Assistant Lecturer

The data above shows that the lecturer and assistant lecturer (P1) used *hidep* to address the students (P2). *Hidep* is generally used to show politeness to the younger participants of the interaction. *Hidep* is also used in the formal situation. In this context, both lecturer and his assistant used *hidep* to show appreciation to the students.

**Table 6.** Terms of address *Urang*

No	Sentence	Speaker
1	<i>Ieu kumargi pangantar, sakeudik-sakeudik tapi urang ningali peta sacara kasalurusahan.</i> (Even though this is only an introduction, but <b>we</b> better know the whole concept)	Lecturer

The word *urang* is used as both formal and informal medium of communication. The word *urang* can be classified as polite depending on the situation. For example, the lecturer (P1) uses *urang* to address all of them in the class, including himself and his assistant. The

use of *urang* in this context is considered as a polite term of address in a formal situation.

**Table 7.** Terms of address *Anjeunna*

No	Sentence	Speaker
1	<i>Ajip mah sagala rupi dituliskeun, nah urang ulah eleh, Ajip Rosidi mah SMA ge teu tamat tapi kulantaran daek nulis jeung daek maca, ajeunna jadi Profesor di Jepang.</i> (Ajip likes to write everything, and we should be like him. Because he likes to write and read, he became a Professor in Japan, even though Ajip Rosidi never graduated from high school)	Lecturer

The data above shows that the lecturer (P1) addresses Ajip Rosidi (P3) using the address *anjeunna* which is used as a word to signify politeness and respect in addressing an individual (P3). This word is articulated as a bridge when there is anonymity among the individuals present in the context.

## 4.2 Social Distance

Regarding the social distance, identification of the distance between participants present in an interaction is based on the terms of address used during the conversation. For example, the word *Bapa* generally is used to portray a higher social status who has more authority and need to be respected to keep and maintain the distance. The lecturer is also considered superior and authoritative in terms of knowledge, signifying power and relationship as compared to the students and the assistant lecturer, hence the designated term *Bapa* is used. In this context, generally, the conversation is kept in a formalized manner, and anonymity is maintained without establishing a connection to other individuals in the group. A similar example can be used for the word *abdi*. Students in a formal conversation generally use that word as a first-person singular to address the higher status of the interlocutor showing respect while maintaining a formal relation.

The word *hidep* and *ajeunna* are also examples that are used during conversations with a group of individuals in this particular setting. It maintains the generation gap

and keeps a formal conversation with respect while keeping distance as required.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Having discussed those points above, the terms of address used during the conversation among a lecturer, assistant lecturer, and students are classified as polite (lemes) terms of address in the Sundanese system. This shows that in Sundanese term of address is mainly influenced by power relation, social status, familiarity, and the relationship among the speakers. From a politeness perspective, Sundanese tend to use address terms to show their willingness to respect the addressee's positive face as well as a positive politeness strategy to keep the distance in a formal situation. By doing so, using those terms of address participants could also show familiarity and intimacy within a setting be it a formal one or an informal one. As a tool of communication, showing politeness could also be used to state ones stand point of being an equal member of a group or having a social distance of non-equality.

## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors have the same contribution to this study.

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