

## **Abstract**

### **Sundanese language in online modes of communication: A case study of appraisal system.**

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Sundanese language is marked with prominent features of politeness in oral communication more prominently through the use of speech levels (Such as Anderson, 1993; Locher, 1996). However, modes of online communications in the contemporary context such as Facebook and E-mail have provided more sources of meanings to maintain a sense of politeness.

This study aims at exploring the way in which Sundanese language in online written communication carries features of spoken communication that enact a sense of politeness. This study is guided by two main questions: What patterns of language in online modes of communication maintain a sense of politeness? And how do online communications contribute to the realization of the patterns? This study relies on Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) framework of appraisal systems (Martin & White, 2005; Martin & Rose, 2008) to explore the patterns of language that carry meanings to maintain politeness. Within SFL, meanings are encoded in language in three interconnected layers: language (grammar and discourse), social context, and genre (Martin, 1992). Language in the form of grammar and discourse is encoded to convey a purpose of communication which is situated by an online mode as a genre of communication. For the purpose of this study, the interpersonal metafunction is a focus to see the enactment of language users' social relationships.

The data are based on a qualitative case study of online communications between a researcher and his encounters in his correspondences through Email and Facebook. Based on the analysis using Martin and White (2005), and Martin and Rose's (2008) appraisal system in language, the study reveals that the employment of positive polarity to enact a contradictory stance is maintained in most of communications while speech levels are often used inappropriately. Online communications which are media-interfaced instead of face to face interactions have reduced the significance of speech levels in realizing politeness. The chance to delay responses in online communications enriches heteroglossic situations in which multiple references are enacted to maintain good interpersonal relationships. Other ethics and aesthetics are also realized through the use of modal adjuncts.

This study is significant to contribute to building awareness among Sundanese speakers that Sundanese language provides ample of resources to be enacted in any modes of communication including online communications to maintain good personal relationships. Despite limited number of participants, this study shows that Sundanese language has similarities with other world languages in enacting its functions to maintain speakers' interpersonal relationships.