

**AFFECTIVE STANCE AND THE USE OF SELF-REFERENCE  
IN SPOKEN INDONESIAN  
AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN BANDUNG**

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**ABSTRACT**

This research is focused on the factors relating to the selection of the first-person singular reference in conversations and to the attitudes and motivation behind these choices. Data is in the form of actual conversations among the university students in Bandung, regardless of their ethnic background, culture or language, recorded using digital audio and video recorders. Supplementary data in the form of meta-data is obtained through questionnaires and interviews that include questions about the background of the participants.

This study is especially significant for three reasons. First, Bandung, as one of the main education destinations in Indonesia, is very multicultural. Second, undergraduate students with ages ranging from 18 to 24 years are assumed to adopt current changes easily, which particularly influence their attitudes and behavior in language use. Third, the use of self-reference is one of the elements of language that is ubiquitous in both spoken and written communications. The fact that Indonesian speakers have several choices of words to refer to self, each of which has different degrees of politeness as to whom a speaker is talking. As mentioned by Djenar (2007) the self-reference choices, among others, are *aku*, *saya*, *gua/gue* and proper names. Citing the example of Berman (1992), Djenar (2007) also mentioned the zero anaphora or deletion of self-reference. In addition, West Java region where the Sundanese is dominant has many words of Sundanese to refer to the first singular person among of which are *abdi*, *abi*, *aing*, *kuring*, *sim abdi*, *sim kuring*, *pribados*, *sorangan*, and *didieu* which all mean "I" in English. Some of these words are often used by young people in conversations using Indonesian in the forms of code-mixings. The wide selection of self-references in Indonesian is not only confusing for learners who are not native speakers but also for native speakers, who may frequently choose words considered inappropriate by others.

The results of this study show a significant difference between male and female students in terms of the self-reference choices as well as their motivations. Another salient finding is a high frequency of 'aku' used by the youths for talking with older people, parents, and teachers, which is considered to be impolite. The use of the Sundanese self-reference is more preferable among male students to talk with younger people and friends from the same genders. The grounds for their choices mostly related to their familiarity, comfort, politeness, and the response of the second person(s).

*Key words: affective stance, self-reference, language choices*

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