

Request Strategies by Sundanese in Same and Cross Gender Communication

Febri Dwi Putra
English Language and Literature
Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia
febridwiputra@student.upi.edu

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the patterns of request strategies used by Sundanese males and females when communicating with the same and cross-gender. It also explores the possible factors affecting the use of request by the participants. Applying a descriptive qualitative method, the participants for this research were 5 Sundanese females and 5 Sundanese males, aged 19-23. The participants were students from a public university in northern Bandung which were purposely selected. To analyze the data, this study employed request strategies theory proposed by Blum-kulka and Olshtain (1984) and factors affecting the request strategies by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Han (2013). The results show that Sundanese males and females used direct strategy more than conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect strategy. Sundanese people use direct strategy when requesting to friends both to same and cross-gender, while conventionally indirect strategy used to request to strangers. These findings suggest that the gender of the interlocutors is not taken into consideration for determining the request strategy, but the speakers pay attention more to age and the distance with the interlocutors. This is due to cultural characteristics of Sundanese that applies *undak usuk basa*.

Keywords: *speech act of request, request strategies, gender, Sundanese*

INTRODUCTION

Language is the primary medium for communication between people to build a relationship with others. In fact, people use language to share their ideas and thoughts. In communicating their ideas or thoughts, people sometimes communicate their intention through utterances. To understand the meaning of an utterance, people need to have adequate pragmatic competence. Pragmatic competence is the awareness of what is (not) proper in the context (Kasper, 1997). However, it should be noted that the pragmatic competence may be different from one culture to another.

Moreover, the pragmatic competence can be observed from the use of speech act in a communication. Austin (1962) defines speech act as the actions performed in saying something. Through speech acts, people can perform a specific action by uttering an utterance. An utterance can perform these following acts: apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise or request.

In regard to request, Searle (1969) defines request as an act that

considered as an effort by a speaker (S) to make hearer (H) do something, and which in S assumption, H is capable of doing what S wants. However, the result of the request is not clear that H will do an act that S requested. For example, when a speaker said 'Move the car!' to a hearer, it means that S want H to move their car in which S believe that H is able to move the car.

Many studies have been carried out on request strategies. Some researchers were focusing on a cross-cultural approach, comparing one culture to another. This includes a research by Jalilifar (2009) Iranian EFL Learners and Australian Native Speakers; Bataller (2010) non-native speakers of Spanish and the native speakers of Spanish; Han (2013) Chinese and British English; and Salvesen (2015) Norwegian English learner and native speakers of English. While some other researchers paid more attention to a particular language or culture. This includes the research done by Kilickaya (2010) who examined request strategy by Iranian EFL students and Hassall (1999) who

investigated request strategies in Indonesian. They shared similar findings which were the dominant use of conventionally indirect strategies of request.

From the previous studies, it can be seen that study on request in English has received greater attention as compared to other languages including local language such as Sundanese. Moreover, it is believed that some differences occur in the usage of structures, vocabularies, and the way of using particular language between men and women. Thus, investigating request strategies of Sundanese males and females can be useful to discover the possibilities of differences that occur.

This present study aims to investigate the pattern of request strategies using the classification of request strategies by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) which were used by Sundanese males and females when communicating with the same and cross-gender. In addition, this study also attempts to discover the possible factors affecting participants' decisions when selecting the strategies, by using factors proposed

by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Han (2013). The findings of this study are also expected to enrich the pragmatic literature of a particular language.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section presents the discussion on issues related to the topic of this study. The discussion includes the elaboration on speech act, request and request strategies, language and gender, and the possible factors affecting the request strategies, and previous studies on request strategies.

Speech act

Studies on pragmatics performance have been popular since the 60s and have been resulted thousands of research, books and journal articles. The foremost theorists of the speech act are Austin (1962) and Searle (1969).

Austin (1962), defines speech act as the actions performed in saying something. By the definition, it is implied that an utterance can perform a particular action. Moreover, Austin (1962) stated that there are three layers of meaning conveyed in an utterance. The three layers are namely

locutionary acts (literal meaning), illocutionary acts (the speaker intention), and perlocutionary acts (the effect expected from the utterance). Moreover, Austin (1962) classify the speech acts into 5 categories, namely verdictives, exercitives, commissives, expositives, and behabitives.

Austin's (1962) classification of speech acts seems to be lack in the universality since it only contains English illocutionary verbs, while not all illocutionary verbs are performative verbs. Thus, Searle (1976), developed Austin's classification of speech acts and proposed a new classification of speech acts in which he claims that this classification of speech acts can be used universally. This classification of speech acts is proposed by Searle (1976) includes:

a. Representatives

This category of speech acts represents an assertion carrying true or false values of states or events in the world (e.g. statements, assertions, conclusions);

b. Declarations

This category is those kinds of speech act which perform declarative statements;

c. Directives

This category represents speech acts where the speaker attempted to make hearer do something or direct someone to perform or not to perform an act (e.g. commands, orders, requests, and suggestions);

d. Expressives

This category is those kinds of speech act that express the speaker's attitude and feelings about something (e.g. apologies, congratulations, compliments, and thankfulness);

e. Commissives

These are the speech acts which create an obligation on the part of the speaker to a future action (e.g. promise and threat).

Request and Request Strategies

According to Searle (1969), a request is an act done by the speaker as an effort to make hearer do something which the speaker believes that the hearer is able to do. However, the

result is not clear that the hearer will do what the speaker says. Moreover, according to Brown and Levinson (1987) requests are Face Threatening Acts (FTAs), since a speaker is imposing her/his will on the hearer.

Thus, in requesting something to others, people tend to use particular strategies since a request is a face-threatening act. According to Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984), there are three main levels of request. They argued that the three levels can be manifested universally. The three main levels of request are divided with regard to the level of directness of the request. The three levels are namely:

- a. The most direct or explicit level, this is level includes imperatives.
- b. The conventionally indirect level, which includes *could* and *would* in the request.
- c. Non-conventionally indirect level, at this level the request will be made in the form of hints.

These three levels of directness were further divided into nine request categories called the 'strategy types'. These nine strategy types form an indirectness scale starting with the

most explicit type of request and end with the most indirect type of request.

The nine strategies are as follows:

- a. Explicit levels
 1. Mood derivable: utterances in which the illocutionary force signals by the grammatical mood of the verb (for example: 'leave me alone');
 2. Performatives: the illocutionary force is explicitly named by the speaker (for example: 'I'm asking you not to park the car here');
 3. Hedged performatives: the naming of the illocutionary force is modified by hedging expression (for example: 'I would like to ask you to leave me alone.');
 4. Obligation statements: Utterances which state the obligation for the hearer to carry out the act (for example: 'Sir, you'll have to move your car.');
 5. Want statements: utterances that state the speaker's desire (for example: 'I want you to move your car.');
- b. Conventional indirect

6. Suggestory formulae: the utterance contains the suggestion for the hearer to do x (for example: how about cleaning up?);
 7. Query preparatory: utterance contains the preparatory conditions (willingness, ability, or possibility of the act being performed) as conventionalized in any specific language (for example, 'Would you mind moving your car?');
- c. Non-conventional indirect
8. Strong hints: Utterances containing the partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act (for example, 'The game is boring.');
 9. Mild hints: Utterances that make no reference to the request proper (or any of its elements) but are interpretable as requests by context (for example, 'I'm a nun' (in response to the persistent boy)).

Language and Gender

Gender is a socially constructed identity of a person. Gender, according to Wodak (1997) is not a pool of attributes possessed by a person, but something a person does. Gender and sex are inextricable. Gender is not just a synonym for sex: sex refers to a biological distinction, while gender is the term to describe socially constructed categories based on sex (Coates, 2004). Language and gender are inextricable. Xia (2013) states that gender issues have become connected with the issue of language. In addition, gender contributes great influences toward academic discipline.

According to Kendal and Tannen (1997), in a group communication, men tend to keep the floor more often than women, men tend to interrupt more, and men talk more often and longer than women. However, according to Coates (2013) women tend to use more hedges and compliments more to others in a communication, while men talk more, using swear words more and use aggravated directives to get things done. She further argues that women

also have more polite linguistic behavior. This suggest that gender may become one of the factors affecting the use of language.

Factors affecting the request strategies

Since a request is a face-threatening act, when requesting something to the hearer, a speaker must be aware that their request may threaten the hearer's face. Hence, there is a close relationship between the degree of politeness and the degree of indirectness of requests.

Brown and Levinson (1987) argues that social variables, such as power, social distance and absolute ranking of impositions are crucial in the realization of speech act. Moreover, according to Han (2013), there are some factors such as situational, social and cultural background that are taken into consideration when requesting to others. Social factors such as gender, age, and social status come into consideration in communication. Some researchers agreed that social

and cultural factors affect how people speak to others.

Previous Studies

Many studies have been conducted in the area of request. Some researchers were focusing on a cross-cultural approach, comparing one culture to another. This includes a research by Jalilifar (2009) Iranian EFL Learners and Australian Native Speakers; Bataller (2010) non-native speakers of Spanish and the native speakers of Spanish; Han (2013) Chinese and British English; and Salvesen (2015) Norwegian English learner and native speakers of English. While some other researchers paid more attention to a particular language or culture. This includes the research done by Kilickaya (2010) request strategy by Iranian EFL students and Hassall (1999) request strategies in Indonesian.

Hassall (1999) for example, conducted research on the request strategies in Indonesian. The findings of the research were conventionally indirect strategies as the most frequently used strategy of request

with 51.2%, followed by direct strategy with 42.7%, and non-conventionally indirect (hints) was the least used strategy with only 6.1%. This research was in line with some researcher, such as Jalilifar (2009), Kiliçkaya (2010), Han (2013), Salvesen (2015), who found out that most of their participants used conventionally indirect strategies of requests.

Jalilifar (2009) conducted a study on request strategy comparing Iranian EFL learners and Australian native speakers. Her study aims to examine the relationship between students' level of language proficiency and complexity of request strategies and to investigate the possible difference in the type and frequency of the request strategies made by the participants considering power and distance. The result of this study shows that more proficient the speaker, the use of conventionally and non-conventionally indirect types of requesting is increasing, while direct requesting decreases. While other researchers only focusing on the request strategies, Jalilifar also

focusing on the second language acquisition and language proficiency.

Kiliçkaya (2010) undertook a study investigates the pragmatic competence in using the speech act of requesting. DCT (Discourse Completion Test) used to collect the data and the classification of the request strategy by Blum-Kulka is the main framework to discover the pragmatic competence of Turkish EFL Students. The study shows that conventionally indirect used the most by the participants and non-conventional indirect level is the least used strategy. Thus, this study is in line with Salvesen's work, who discover that conventionally indirect is the most used strategy in requesting.

Bataller (2010) carried out a study aims to investigate the pragmatic development of non-native speakers of Spanish. An open role-play used to collect the data, while Blum-Kulka's theory of request strategies used to discover the request strategies of the participants. The study has shown that American learners rarely use simple interrogative, elliptic form and

command. Bataller argued that students need to be pragmatically competent in the TL to gain and maintain interactions with the native speakers of the target country.

Han (2013) conducted a comparative study of native speakers of British English and Mandarin Chinese, investigates the similarity and differences in request strategies. He also stated that situational, social and cultural factors are taken into consideration in requesting something since the requests are impositives. The result of this study shows that both native speakers of British English and Mandarin Chinese speakers value conventionally indirect and the difference is that native speakers of Chinese prefer to use direct strategies in some cases. This study is in line with most of the researchers that people often use conventionally indirect strategies.

Salvesen (2015) conducted a study that aims to investigate the use of politeness strategies in requests by Norwegian learners of English compared to the native speakers of English. In spite of the main aim to

investigate the politeness strategies used by the Norwegian speakers, Salvesen also investigates the request strategies used by the participants. Using the theory of request strategies developed by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), this qualitative study classifies the request strategies used by the participants. The result of this study shows that English speakers use implicit strategies and hints, while Norwegian learners of English tend to use explicit forms of request strategies. Therefore, this study shows that linguistic behaviors may differ culturally.

As indicated by the previous study, most people value conventionally indirect strategies more than direct strategies. However, in some cases, some people also use direct strategies. This implied that the realization of speech acts may differ culturally. Moreover, situational, social and cultural factors influence the way people requesting to other.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study applied a descriptive qualitative method since this study aimed to examine and explore a

detailed understanding of a language phenomenon, i.e. the request strategies used by the participants, and factors affecting the use of request strategies by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Han (2013). This research method is in line with Creswell (2012) who states that the qualitative approach is aimed to explore a problem and develop a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon.

Participants for this research were 5 females and 5 males, aged 19-23. The participants are students from a public university in northern Bandung which were randomly selected. All the participants are the native speakers of Sundanese who actively use Sundanese as their daily language for communication. For the ethical purposes, all names of the participants are written by using pseudonym.

The instrument used in this research was a discourse completion test (DCT). DCT is a tool to elicit data of particular speech acts in Pragmatics. According to Blum-Kulka (1982), DCT was an instrument of data collection that

initially developed to compare the speech act realization of native speakers and learners. However, in this study, only one language was observed, which was Sundanese. The instrument contained a short and clear illustration of a particular situation that the participants need to respond.

Interviews were also used as another instrument in collecting the data. It was utilized to complete the data. Interviews were expected to collect the data regarding the possible factors affecting participants' decision in selecting a particular strategy. The interviews were recorded in order to avoid data loss. The recordings were transcribed to make it easier to understand.

Therefore, the data of this research were utterances that all the participants produced when they were requesting to others, both to males and females; to friends and strangers. The total number of requests elicited from the participants was approximately 120. The utterances were analyzed using the categories of request strategies developed by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984). The data analysis was including the

steps as follows: first, all the data were classified according to whom the utterance is intended. The response to female friends labeled using the acronym FF; response to male friends labeled using the acronym MF; response to female strangers labeled using the acronym FS, and response to male strangers labeled using the acronym MS. Then, the utterances were translated into English. The next step was analyzing the data using Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) theory to determine the strategy of the request.

The data were counted correspondingly using this formula:

$$P = \frac{f}{n} \times 100$$

In which,

P = percentage (each type of request strategy)

f = frequency (each type of request strategy)

N = Total number of request strategies

to calculate which strategy was used the most by the participants and which strategy was used the least by the participant. The calculation used

to discover the pattern of the request strategy used by the participants.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study investigates the request strategies by Sundanese male and female students. To figure out the strategies used by the participants, the taxonomy of request strategies by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) was used. The findings of this research generally can be illustrated in Table 1 below. This table shows the result on types of request strategies used by the participants in the scenarios.

Table 1. Request strategies used by Sundanese

Three main levels	Request strategies	Total	
		F	%
The Most Direct	Mood derivable	50	42%
	Performative	4	3%
	Hedged performative	6	5%
	Obligation statement	-	-

	Want statement	12	10%
Conventionally indirect	Suggestory formulae	-	-
	Query preparatory	42	35%
	Strong hints	6	5%
Non-conventionally indirect	Mild hints	-	-
	Total requests (n)	120	100%

The results of this study show that Sundanese females and males use direct strategies with 60% of the requests, followed by conventionally indirect request with 35% and the least used strategy was non-conventionally Indirect strategies with only 5%. However, the most frequently used strategy was mood derivable with 42%, followed by query preparatory with 35%, Want statement 10%, hedged performative and strong hints with 5% each and performative was the least used strategy with only 3% of the requests.

In regard to previous study, these findings of this study are different

from some previous studies, including Hassal (2010), Kilickaya (2010), Jalilifar (2009), who found out that the most used strategy was conventionally indirect. On the contrary, the result of this study shows similarities with Han (2013) and by Salvesen (2015) who stated that Chinese and Norwegian English Learner tend to use direct strategies the most.

The results of this study show that there are similarities between males and females, requesting to others. It appears that most Sundanese, both males and females did not distinguish how they speak to the same and cross-gender. However, they use different strategies when requesting either to friends or strangers.

When communicating with friends, Sundanese both males and females mostly used direct strategy. The participants mostly used mood derivable to make a request to friends, whether it is to the same or cross-gender. On the other hand, Sundanese both males and females mostly used conventionally indirect strategy when communicating with friends. The

participants mostly used query preparatory strategy, or to ask whether or not the hearers are willing to do something. This strategy used the most to make a request to strangers, whether it is to the same or cross-gender.

However, there were some cases that are different from most requests that made by the participants. The detailed findings and discussion will be discussed in the Sundanese males and Sundanese females' sub-sections below.

Sundanese Males

From the general findings, it can be seen that most of Sundanese male and

female students used direct strategy more than the other strategies when requesting to friends, but they mostly used conventional indirect strategy when requesting to strangers. As what Salvesen (2015) stated that the indirect form of request appears to be more polite than the direct request.

The data show that males tend to use more indirect strategies when requesting both to males and females stranger and use more direct strategies both to male and female friends. While the sub-strategies that used the most by males is mood derivable strategy followed by query preparatory strategy. This can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Request strategies of Sundanese males

Three main levels	Request strategies	FF		MF		FS		MS		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
The Most Direct	Mood deivable	10	66	14	93	1	7	1	7	26	43
	Performative	2	13	-	-	1	7	1	7	4	7
	Hedged performative	-	-	-	-	2	13	2	13	4	7
	Obligation Statement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Want Statement	1	7	1	7	2	13	2	13	6	10

Conventionally Indirect	Suggestory formulae	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Query Preparatory	1	7	-	-	8	53	8	53	17	28
Non-conventionally Indirect	Strong Hints	1	7	-	-	1	7	1	7	3	8
	Mild Hints	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Request (n)		15	100%	15	100%	15	100%	15	100%	60	100%

*FF= Female friends, MF= Male friends, FS= Female strangers, MS= Male strangers

From the Table 2, it can be seen that most of the male participants used the direct strategies with 67%, followed by conventionally indirect strategies with 28% and the least used strategy was non-conventionally indirect with only 5%. Most of the male participants used the direct strategies when requesting to the male friends, for example:

Ridwan’s request to move a motorcycle to male friends:

Sundanese (S): ‘Halik! Eta motor ngahalangan.’

English (E): ‘Move! That motorcycle is blocking’

Rido’s request to borrow a pen to male friends:

S: ‘Nginjeum pulpen, rek ngisi formulir’

E: ‘Lend me a pen! I’m going to fill a form’

Rofiq’s request to take a picture to male friends:

S: ‘Fotokeun heula aing!’

E: ‘Take a photo of me first!’

Mood derivable used the most when requesting to friends. As shown in the examples above, the illocutionary force is indicated by the verb ‘halik’ or move, ‘nginjeum’ or borrow and ‘fotokeun’. The speaker directly stated what the hearer needed to do.

The data show that male have the tendencies to use more indirect strategies when requesting to

strangers, both to males and to females. In this case, the participants seem to save the hearer's face by using the more polite forms of request, which is the conventionally indirect request strategies. This is in accordance with Han (2013) stated that the more indirect the request, and more polite the speaker will be. Query preparatory strategy used the most by male participants when requesting to strangers. The use of this strategy is indicated by the use of the words '*tiasa*', '*bisa*' or '*daék teu*', to ask the hearers willingness to do the act. For example:

Imam's request to move a motorcycle to male strangers:

S: 'Kang punten, **tiasa dialihkeun** motorna, abdi bade ngalangkung'

E: 'Bro, excuse me, **could you move** the motorcycle? I am going to pass through.'

Rido's request to male strangers:

S: 'A punten, gaduh pulpen? **tiasa nambut** sakedap'

E: 'Excuse me, bro, do you have a pen? **Could I borrow** it for a while?'

However, there are some cases that the male participants used a

different strategy than the others participants. There are some participants who used hedged performative strategy and strong hints strategy to make a request. Example of hedged performative:

Rofiq's request to male strangers:

S: 'Punten teh, **hoyong nyungkeun pangmotokeun** sakedap, teu nanaon?'

E: 'Excuse me, **I would like to ask you to take a picture**, is it ok? Thank you.'

In the utterance above, the participant used a direct strategy, which conveyed by hedged performative as the strategy to request. However, it seems that he also used tag question 'is it ok?' to make the utterance less threaten the interlocutors.

Rido's request to female strangers:

S: 'Teh punten ngawagel? Pami henteu, **nyuhunkeun bantosan pangmotokeun.**'

E: 'Excuse me, am I bothering you? If not, **I'm asking your help to take a picture.**'

In the utterance above, it is quite the same as the previous one, the

speaker used something to lessen the threat received by the interlocutors by asking if he bothering her or not.

From the findings, it can be inferred that Sundanese males mostly used direct strategy to make a request to friends, both males and females. While most indirect strategies used to make a request to male and female strangers. It can be concluded that the gender of the interlocutors is not taken into consideration for determining the request strategy, but the speaker is more considering to the closeness with the interlocutors.

Sundanese Females

From the general findings, it appears that both male and female students used direct strategy more than the other strategies when requesting to friends, but they mostly used conventional indirect strategy when requesting to strangers. The data show that female participants tend to use direct request to their friends and more indirect request when requesting to strangers. This can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Request strategies of Sundanese females

Three main levels	Request strategies	FF		MF		FS		MS		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
The Most Direct	Mood deivable	13	86	11	73	-	-	-	-	24	40
	Performative	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Hedged performative	-	-	-	-	1	7	1	7	2	3
	Obligation Statement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Want Statement	1	7	2	13	2	13	1	7	6	10
Conventionally Indirect	Suggestory formulae	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Query Preparatory	1	7	1	7	10	67	13	86	25	42

Non- conventionally Indirect	Strong Hints	-	-	1	7	2	13	-	-	3	5
	Mild Hints	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Request (n)		15	100 %	15	100 %	15	100 %	15	100 %	60	100 %

*FF= Female friends, MF= Male friends, FS= Female strangers, MS= Male strangers

The data show that females tend to use more indirect strategies when requesting strangers, both to males and females and use more direct strategies both to male and female friends. However, there are some other strategies that are used by females when requesting to others. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) higher levels of indirectness may result in higher level of politeness.

The data show that direct strategy is the most used strategy with the total of 53% of the request, followed by the conventional indirect strategy with 42% and non-conventionally indirect strategy with only 5% of the requests. However, the sub-strategies that used the most by females is query preparatory with 42%, followed by mood derivable strategy with 40%, want statement with 10%, strong hints with 5% and hedged performative is

the least used strategy with only 3% of the requests.

From the table above, it can be seen that Sundanese females used mood derivable the most when requesting to friends. For example:

Winda's request to female:

S: 'Eta motor **pindahkeun** heula!'

E: '**Move** that motorcycle first!'

Nida's request to male:

S: '**Nginjeum** pulpen euy...'

E: 'Lend me a pen'

As shown in the examples above, the illocutionary force is indicated by the verb '*pindahkeun*' or move, and '*nginjeum*' or borrow. In the examples above, the speaker directly stated what the hearer needed to do.

The data also show that female have the tendencies to use more indirect strategies when requesting to strangers, both to males and to females. Query preparatory strategy

was used the most by female participants when requesting to strangers. The use of this strategy is indicated by the use of the word '*tiasa*' or '*daek teu*' to ask the interlocutors willingness to do the act.

For example:

Fika's request to male strangers:

S: 'Kang punten, **tiasa nambut** heula pulpen? Ieu bade ngeusian formulir.'

E: 'Excuse me, **could I borrow** a pen? I'm going to fill a form.'

Nida's request to female strangers:

S: 'Punten teh, **tiasa ngalih** heula sakedap? Abi bade ngalangkung.'

E: 'Excuse me, **could you move** your motorcycle first? I'm going through.'

However, there are some cases that the female participants used a different strategy than the others participants. There are some participants who used want statement, hedged performative and strong hints strategy to make a request. For example:

Fitri's request to female strangers:

S: '(nama) Punten ih **hoyong nambut** pulpen'

E: '(name), sorry, I **want to borrow** a pen.'

In the F4 utterance above, the speaker stated her intention. This strategy is called want statement and belongs to the direct strategy. Another example is the use of non-conventionally indirect strategy, which is strong hints.

Yuyun's request to female strangers:

S: 'Teh, kagungan pulpen?'

E: 'Sis, do you have a pen?'

As what Blum-kulka and Olshtain (1984) state, those belongs to the strong hints strategy is "an utterance that contains a partial reference to the object or the elements needed for the implementation of the act". In the example above, instead of expressing her intention directly, she only asks the interlocutors if she had a pen or not.

As indicated by the findings, Sundanese females mostly used direct strategy to make a request to friends, both males and females. While most indirect strategies were used to make requests to male and female strangers. Similar to Sundanese males, it can be concluded that the gender of the interlocutors is not taken into consideration for determining the request strategy, but the speaker is

more considering to the distance with the interlocutors.

Factors affecting the request strategies

This study used interviews to elicit students' responses on the possible factors that may affect how Sundanese make a request. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), social variables, such as power, social distance and absolute ranking of impositions are crucial in the realization of speech act. Moreover, Han (2013) states that there are some factors such as situational, social and cultural background that are taken into consideration when requesting to others. Social factors such as gender, age, and social status come into consideration in communication. However, in this study the DCT was only concerned on gender and distance of the interlocutors.

Most of the participants stated that some factors affect how they speak when requesting to others. Most of them stated that social factors such as the age and their familiarity or their closeness from the hearers were the most influential in choosing a

strategy. As what Sisi and Winda said:

Sisi:

“cara saya meminta sesuatu biasanya saya membedakan berdasarkan usianya, kalau ke sebaya saya meminta secara biasa. kalau usianya lebih tua harus lebih sopan”

“The way I make a request, usually depends on the age (of the hearer). If I request to those with the same age with me, I request with usual way but if I requesting to a person older than me, I will be more polite.”

Winda:

“...dari apakah saya familiar dengan orang tersebut atau tidak.apakah masih kenalan atau sudah menjadi teman. Jika kenalan kan belum akrab, jadi belum tahu bagaimana dia sehari-hari, maka ada batasan ketika meminta.”

"...from whether I am familiar with the person or not. Is she still an acquaintance or has become a friend. If she just my acquaintance and was not familiar with her, so I do not know how she is, then there is a limit when requesting."

The participants argued that the age of the interlocutors affect how they requesting and they argued that whomever the hearer is, whether it is male or female, they will not distinguish how they speak when they are close to each other. However, when they are not too close with the hearer, they will choose more indirect or more polite strategy.

As what Han (2013) stated, cultural factors are also taken into consideration when requesting to others. In this study, it is found out that in Sundanese there were also rules how to speak. The participants mentioned three levels of polite words in Sundanese, namely *basa lemes*, *basa loma*, and *basa kasar*. This can be seen from Rofiq's answer to the interview:

"...di Bahasa sunda waktu saya kecil dulu ada yang namanya undak usuk basa. Seingat saya ada tiga tingkatan yaitu basa lemes, loma dan kasar. Bahasa lemes itu untuk orang yang tidak kita kenal, orang yang lebih tua dan orang-orang yang kita hormati. Bahasa loma itu untuk teman sebaya atau teman yan tidak begitu akrab. Dan Bahasa kasar itu

iasanya ditujukan untuk binatang atau teman yang sudah sangat akrab."

"...in Sundanese language, when I was a kid there is something called as *Undak usuk basa*. As I remember there are three levels, namely *basa lemes*, *loma* (rather polite) and *kasar* (coarse language). Lemes is for strangers, older people and people that we honored. Loma's language is for peers or friends who aren't very familiar. And the coarse language is usually intended for animals or friends who are already very familiar."

According to his explanation, Sundanese are expected to use each levels to different person. However, from his explanation above, it is implied that Sundanese does not take gender into consideration when speaking

However, according to the participants, gender was not taken into consideration when requesting to others as long as they are close to each other. It appears that what Brown and Levinson's (1987) claim that social status and social distance are the most influential in communication is true,

especially to decide when to speak politely.

CONCLUSION

This study investigates the request strategies by Sundanese males and females. The result of this study shows that Sundanese females and males use more direct strategies with 60% of the requests, followed by conventionally indirect request with 35% and the least used strategy was non-conventionally indirect strategies with only 5%. However, the most frequently used strategy was mood derivable with 42%, followed by query preparatory with 35%, Want statement 10%, hedged performative and strong hints with 5% each and performative was the least used strategy with only 3% of the requests. In spite of the fact that Sundanese use more direct request, it does not mean that Sundanese have less polite behavior when requesting to friends.

In general, the results show that Sundanese males and females used direct strategy more than conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect strategy. Sundanese use direct strategy to

friends both to same and cross-gender, while conventionally indirect strategy used to request to strangers. This suggests that the gender of the interlocutors does not affect the use of request strategy. Instead, factors like age and closeness are factors that influence the use of request strategy in the speaking.

This implies that social and cultural factors are taken into consideration in requesting to others. For example, Sundanese which has rules on how to speak to others, it is called *undak usuk basa*. Finally, it can be concluded that for Sundanese students, factors such as age, distance or closeness, and social status influence the realization of speech acts. However, gender was not taken into consideration in performing a speech act, particularly in a request in Sundanese context.

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