

SOCIOPRAGMATIC STRATEGIES FOR SUNDANESE LANGUAGE PRESERVATION IN YOUTUBE VIDEOS FEATURING DEDI MULYADI

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Abstract

The declining use of regional languages in Indonesia necessitates the search for innovative preservation strategies in the digital era. Unlike previous studies that have focused primarily on political communication and media framing, this study highlights the sociopragmatic dimensions of regional language preservation through digital communication. This study analyzes sociopragmatic communication strategies within Kang Dedi Mulyadi's YouTube content, focusing on the use of Sundanese and speech elements that enhance the vitality of regional languages. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data from three of Kang Dedi Mulyadi's YouTube videos were transcribed and coded into relational, educational, and cultural/identity categories, and subsequently analyzed through thematic interpretation. This study substantiates the notion that the sociopragmatic practices of public figures on digital platforms can serve as a potential model for revitalizing regional languages. The findings extend sociopragmatic perspectives by demonstrating how digital discourse contributes to regional language revitalization through the integration of cultural identity, communicative practices, and audience engagement.

Keywords: *digital communication; language vitality; sociopragmatic strategies; Sundanese language preservation; YouTube discourse*

1. Introduction

Regional languages serve as a primary foundation for the cultural identity of the Indonesian nation. Beyond being a medium for daily communication, regional languages also function as a vessel for the transmission of local knowledge, social norms, and cultural values across generations (Putri et al., 2025; Wagiati et al., 2022). However, the wave of globalization and advancements in communication technology have shifted language usage patterns in society. Languages with broader reach are now dominating, consequently marginalizing regional languages in various spheres of life, including the digital environment (Ori & Susianti, 2023; Ridwan et al., 2026).

The decline in the use of regional languages is most pronounced among the younger generation. Data from *Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS)* reveals that Generation Z and Generation Alpha only use regional languages within the family environment at rates of 61–62 percent. This situation indicates a weakening of language transmission processes and necessitates

preservation approaches that are more aligned with the dynamics of the digital era (Aziz, 2023).

In this context, digital media and public figures play a crucial role. Digital platforms, while accelerating the marginalization of regional languages, simultaneously open broader opportunities for revitalization if utilized creatively. Public figures such as Kang Dedi Mulyadi (KDM), who consistently incorporates Sundanese in his YouTube content, exemplify how a public figure can shape public attitudes towards the preservation of regional languages (Natada & Muslim, 2025; Susanti & Gunawan, 2025).

Previous research has extensively examined the decline in regional language use and various revitalization efforts. However, the majority of studies remain oriented towards political dimensions, personal branding, or critical discourse analysis (Adam & Setiadarma, 2026; Alfikri, 2024; Barokah et al., 2023). In-depth studies on the sociopragmatic strategies of public figures in digital media are still very limited. This research aims to fill this gap by analyzing how relational, educational, and cultural/identity strategies in KDM utterances contribute to the vitality of the Sundanese language in the digital space. Specifically, this study addresses three main questions: (1) How are sociopragmatic communication strategies realized in KDM YouTube content? (2) How does the use of Sundanese contribute to the vitality of regional languages? and (3) What linguistic features support language preservation in the digital environment? This study further argues that digital spaces function not only as platforms for discourse but also as sites for regional language preservation.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Role of Regional Languages in Cultural Identity and Social Communication

Regional languages do more than help people communicate in daily life; they also represent collective identity, local knowledge, social norms, and cultural values (Hadiwijaya et al., 2022). From a sociolinguistic perspective, especially in Hymes' (1972) ethnography of communication, language is closely linked to its social and cultural context (Hashmi, 2025). It operates as a way to pass culture and shape identity (Blommaert, 2019). While earlier research typically describes this symbolic role in a fixed way, it rarely explores how regional languages adapt and remain resilient when national and global languages are dominant, particularly among young people (Hadiwijaya et al., 2022). There is a need for more research on how regional languages remain vital in today's fast-changing communication landscape, especially with the new challenges brought by the digital era that have not been fully explored in the literature (Ridwan et al., 2026). This study attempts to address this gap by examining sociopragmatic strategies to help preserve regional languages.

2.2 The Foundation of Sociopragmatic Theory in Digital Communication

Sociopragmatic offers an essential analytical lens for understanding how social context influences the meaning and function of language in interactions, based on Hymes' (1972) work on communicative competence and the ethnography of communication (Moreno, 2024). The concepts of face-work and presentation of self-proposed by Goffman (1959) are highly relevant for analyzing how people manage their self-image in social interactions, including online (Meng & Nansen, 2022). The politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech's (1983) politeness maxims complement this framework by explaining the linguistic strategies used to preserve social harmony and the

face of the interlocutor (Djumamuratovna, 2025). In the context of digital communication, which is often asynchronous and involves a heterogeneous audience, understanding these concepts becomes increasingly crucial. Sociopragmatic strategies such as phatic communication, speech acts and identity construction become important tools for retaining the relevance of regional languages within the competitive digital space (Susanti & Gunawan, 2025; Yusuf, 2024). This analysis will examine these concepts, linking them with communication practices in the digital environment and their relationship with the preservation of regional languages.

2.3 The Role of Public Figures and Digital Media in the Dynamics of Regional Languages

Digital media has become a space that offers both opportunities and challenges for keeping regional languages alive. Services like YouTube help spread regional language content to more people, but they also make it easier for national and global languages to dominate (Hadiwijaya et al., 2022). Public figures in this setting act as cultural influencers who can legitimize and promote the use of regional languages (Adam & Setiadarma, 2026; Alfikri, 2024). While many studies have looked at how public figures use political communication and personal branding (Barokah et al., 2023; Rosadi et al., 2022), there is still little research that combines sociopragmatic analysis with efforts to preserve regional languages through public figures in digital media. This gap is the basis for this study, which will examine the communication practices of KDM as a case study. The research intends to show how relational, educational and cultural strategies in digital content can help keep regional languages strong, following Fairclough's (2001) view that media discourse does not only reflect, but also forms social reality (Bajri & Alqurayqiri, 2022).

2.4 The Vitality of Regional Languages and Conservation Strategies in a Global Context

The decline and extinction of languages are global phenomena that threaten the world's linguistic diversity. While Fishman (1991) established a theoretical and empirical foundation for understanding language shift and revitalization strategies, recent scholarship emphasizes the complexities of language revitalization in the 21st century, noting the impact of globalization and the need for new transdisciplinary frameworks (Comajoan-Colomé & Coronel--Molina, 2020). Furthermore, the challenges of the 21st century, such as the penetration of digital technology, present new dimensions that require further analysis. In this context, sociopragmatic provides insights into how groups utilize language in interactions to assert identity and maintain language, even under external pressure. Contemporary studies on self-presentation, grounded in Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical perspective, demonstrate how individuals actively manage their self-image and negotiate linguistic identities within fluid online environments (Merunková & Šlerka, 2019). Thus, the integration of sociopragmatic theory with modern language revitalization frameworks is crucial for understanding effective strategies to address the threat of regional language extinction. This perspective is aligned with Blommaert's (2019) critical and sociolinguistic views, which advocate for a reassessment of language-in-society within the online-offline nexus (Rampton, 2021). Although digital media are often perceived as new spaces for the revitalization of regional languages, several theoretical debates suggest that language preservation in digital environments is neither stable nor inherently sustainable. Some studies argue that the visibility of regional languages on digital platforms can broaden

audience reach and strengthen local cultural exposure. However, other studies indicate that the algorithmic logic of digital media tends to prioritize popularity, entertainment, and content commodification, potentially transforming the authenticity of regional languages into mere forms of cultural performance. In this context, the use of regional languages by public figures can be interpreted ambiguously: on the one hand, it contributes to language revitalization and the reinforcement of local identity, while on the other hand, it may lead to the commodification of culture for personal branding, digital popularity, and social media engagement. Furthermore, the dominance of global platforms such as YouTube creates another paradox. Although these platforms provide opportunities for the dissemination of local culture, they continue to operate within global communication structures that largely privilege dominant languages. Therefore, the preservation of regional languages in the digital era should not merely be understood as a process of linguistic revitalization, but also as a site of negotiation between cultural identity, algorithmic logic, the attention economy, and cultural representation within digital spaces.

3. Research Method

This research design uses a descriptive qualitative method with a sociopragmatic framework as its conceptual basis. The selection of this approach is considered critical due to its ability to promote a comprehensive investigation into the correlation between spoken discourse, the surrounding socio-cultural environment and the fundamental role of language within the spectrum of interactions on digital media (Abdullah et al., 2022; Rahardi, 2022).

This study uses publicly accessible digital content and does not involve personal participant data, using purposive sampling techniques. The main criteria for selecting these videos include the dominance of the Sundanese language, the presence of direct audience interaction, and the diversity of communication contexts they present, such as formal, communal, and religious settings. These three videos were deliberately chosen because they effectively present a rich spectrum of contexts, contribute a significant volume of linguistic data and showcase a variety of interaction strategies that are highly representative of sociopragmatic analysis.

Data collection activity was implemented using two main methods: visual recording (video documentation) and verbatim rewriting (transcription) of all verbal expressions in Sundanese complete with relevant contextual information. Over the course of this process, research ethics principles are strictly upheld, using only publicly available YouTube material and making sure that no personal identity information from participants is included. To ensure translation validity, Sundanese utterances were translated into English while preserving contextual and pragmatic meaning. The translations were cross-checked through peer discussion and supervisor consultation.

Data analysis in this study is carried out through three fundamental stages: identification, classification, and interpretation. At the identification stage, highly relevant utterances are sorted based on the concept of communicative competence articulated by Hymes (1972) and further discussed by Hashmi (2025). The identification process was conducted through open coding of all transcripts to identify utterances representing social functions, communication strategies, and the use of Sundanese language in digital contexts. Excerpts were selected based on several thematic criteria, including: (1) the intensity of Sundanese language use, (2) the presence of direct audience interaction, (3) relevance to relational, educational, and cultural identity strategies, and (4) the recurrence of

communication patterns across the dataset. Next, the classification stage categorizes these utterances into three groups of sociopragmatic strategies. The categories include: first, relational or closeness strategies; second, educational or didactic strategies, referring to speech act and politeness concepts; and third, cultural or identity strategies, referring to identity construction and the role of context in communication (Djumamuratovna, 2025). These strategies were operationalized using specific linguistic and contextual indicators. Relational strategies were identified through informal greetings, humor, and phatic communication; educational strategies through persuasive and value-oriented utterances; while cultural or identity strategies were recognized through the use of local vocabulary, cultural symbols, and expressions reflecting Sundanese identity.

The interpretation stage then seeks to connect all the categories formed with a broader sociopragmatic framework, with the aim of explaining the social function and contextual meaning of speech in the context of efforts to preserve the Sundanese language. To enhance analytical reliability, the coding process was conducted iteratively, and interpretations were continuously compared with the theoretical framework employed in the study. Data triangulation was also applied through cross-video comparison and regular consultation with academic supervisors in order to minimize interpretive bias. In the transcription process, all Sundanese utterances were transcribed verbatim by the researchers and subsequently translated into Indonesian for analytical purposes. Translation accuracy was maintained through repeated contextual checking and careful examination of pragmatic meanings and local cultural expressions to avoid shifts in discursive meaning. To ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings, this study uses the data triangulation method and continues to consult with academic supervisors. As an important note, the scope of this study is limited to three videos and adopts a textual analysis method, so the conclusions obtained are illustrative and not intended to be generalized.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

The results of the data analysis were derived from Kang Dedi Mulyadi's speech in YouTube content, highlighting empirical evidence of the use of proximity, educational, and cultural/identity strategies in each instance. Based on observations made through repeated viewings of the three videos, it was found that Kang Dedi Mulyadi's speech consistently combines the use of the Sundanese language with diverse communicative contexts, ranging from formal situations to direct interactions with the public. The observations also revealed an adaptive pattern of language use, wherein word choice, speech style, and intonation were tailored to the audience and the communicative situation. Furthermore, it was found that elements of humor, advice, and local cultural values recurred as integral components of the communication strategy. Thus, the results of the observations reinforce the view that the use of the Sundanese language in this content is not merely spontaneous, but contains strategic patterns that can be analyzed sociopragmatically.

4.1.1 Analysis of Kang Dedi Mulyadi's Formal Speech at the 543rd Anniversary of Bogor City

The first video demonstrates the use of Sundanese within a formal political and cultural setting. The speech combines religious greetings, historical narratives, educational

criticism, and Sundanese philosophical expressions to construct cultural legitimacy and collective identity. Table 1 presents selected representative excerpts from the speech.

Table 1.
Selected Sociopragmatic Patterns in the First Video

Data Excerpt (Sundanese)	English Version	Aspect	Analysis
"Assalamualaikum... sampurasun rampés..."	"Assalamualaikum... greetings of peace and respect..."	Closeness	Religious and cultural greetings function as phatic communication to establish rapport with diverse audiences.
"Pajajaran 543 taun ka tukang..."	"Pajajaran 543 years ago..."	Cultural Identity	Historical references reinforce collective Sundanese identity and cultural memory.
"Manusa paripurna anu apal kana basana..."	"A complete human being understands their language..."	Educational	Language is positioned as a moral and cultural foundation of humanity.
"Silih asah silih asih silih asuh"	"Mutual learning, mutual love, and mutual care"	Cultural Identity	Sundanese philosophical values are used to frame social harmony and communal ethics.
"Sistem pendidikan ayeuna geus robah jadi matérialistik"	"The education system has become materialistic"	Educational	Social criticism is delivered through persuasive and reflective discourse rather than direct confrontation.
"Manusa kudu ngahiji jeung alam"	"Humans must live in harmony with nature"	Cultural Identity	The speech emphasizes traditional Sundanese ecological values and cultural worldview.

The formal speech reflects a sociopragmatic communication pattern that combines relational closeness, educational persuasion, and cultural identity construction within a formal public setting. Religious greetings and Sundanese expressions function as phatic strategies to reduce social distance and strengthen audience engagement, while reflective criticism regarding education and social change positions language as a persuasive medium for moral awareness. At the same time, references to Sundanese philosophy, collective history, and harmony with nature reinforce cultural identity and legitimize the use of regional language in official discourse. These findings suggest that the Sundanese language in KDM's formal communication operates not only as a symbolic cultural marker but also as an adaptive strategy for maintaining regional language visibility in digital public spaces.

4.1.2 Analysis of Kang Dedi Mulyadi's Interactions with the Community during an Event in Cianjur

The second video illustrates Kang Dedi Mulyadi's communication strategies in a more informal and community-oriented context. The interaction emphasizes everyday language, humor, leadership values, and agrarian narratives closely connected to the audience's social reality. Table 2 presents selected representative excerpts from the interaction.

Table 2.
Selected Sociopragmatic Patterns in the Second Video

Data Excerpt (Sundanese)	English Version	Aspect	Analysis
"Daramang sadayana?"	"How are you all?"	Closeness	Informal greetings function as phatic expressions to establish interpersonal familiarity.
"Gaduh béas teu? gaduh artos teu?"	"Do you have rice? Do you have money?"	Closeness	Everyday questions reflect shared social realities and strengthen emotional connection with the audience.
"Ieu mah heureuy"	"This is just a joke"	Closeness	Humor is used as a mitigation strategy to create relaxed and inclusive interaction.
"Tugas pamimpin téh kudu ngabingahkeun rakyat"	"A leader's duty is to make the people happy"	Educational	Leadership discourse emphasizes moral responsibility and public-oriented governance.
"Pertanian kudu dihirupkeun deui"	"Agriculture must be revitalized"	Educational	The speech promotes practical solutions related to local economic sustainability.
"Béas Cianjur téh seungit pulen pédo"	"Cianjur rice is fragrant and soft"	Cultural Identity	Local agricultural products are symbolically positioned as markers of regional identity and pride.
"Gemah ripah répéh rapih"	"A state of prosperity and harmony"	Cultural Identity	Sundanese philosophy is employed to represent ideals of communal harmony and social welfare.
"Ulah géngsi kana tatanén"	"Do not be ashamed of farming"	Educational	Local professions are legitimized through value-oriented and community-based discourse.

Compared to the formal speech context, communication in this interaction is more dialogic, fluid, and socially grounded. Closeness is constructed through informal greetings, rhetorical questions, and humor that reduce hierarchical distance between the speaker and the community. Educational messages are delivered through practical narratives related to leadership, agriculture, and local economic conditions, reflecting the directive function of sociopragmatic communication in everyday contexts. Cultural identity is also reinforced through agrarian symbols, local philosophies, and references to traditional farming practices, positioning Sundanese as a language closely connected to daily social experience rather than merely ceremonial discourse. These findings suggest that regional language preservation in community-based digital communication becomes more effective when integrated with relatable social realities and participatory interaction patterns.

4.1.3 Analysis of Kang Dedi Mulyadi's Lecture during the Pesantren Anniversary Event

The third video presents Kang Dedi Mulyadi's communication strategies within a religious and educational setting. The lecture integrates humor, spiritual values, personal narratives, and Sundanese philosophical expressions to create moral and emotional engagement with the audience. Table 3 presents selected representative excerpts from the lecture.

Table 3.

Selected Sociopragmatic Patterns in the Third Video

Data Excerpt (Sundanese)	English Version	Aspect	Analysis
"Daramang sadayana"	"How are you all?"	Closeness	Informal greetings function as phatic communication to establish familiarity with the audience.
"Ieu mah heureuy tapi aya pesenna"	"This is just a joke, but it carries a message"	Closeness	Humor is employed to maintain audience engagement while delivering implicit moral messages.
"Sim kuring ngahaturkeun salam ka KH Jujun Junaedi"	"I would like to extend my regards to KH Jujun Junaedi"	Closeness	Respectful expressions strengthen social legitimacy and audience trust within a religious context.
"Ruh jeung raga kudu saimbang"	"The soul and the body must be in balance"	Educational	Moral discourse emphasizes balance between spiritual and physical dimensions of life.
"Santri teu diukur tina kamampuan finansialna"	"A student is not measured by their financial capability"	Educational	Educational values are framed through inclusiveness and social equality.
"Rezeki kudu disampeur lain didagoan"	"Sustenance must be pursued, not awaited"	Educational	The utterance promotes self-reliance and work ethics through persuasive discourse.
"Sareundeuk saigel sabobot sapihanéan"	"Moving together in unity and shared responsibility"	Cultural Identity	Sundanese philosophical values reinforce collective solidarity and communal responsibility.
"Rasa jeung rumasa"	"Feeling and self-awareness"	Cultural Identity	Cultural concepts are used to emphasize emotional sensitivity and self-awareness as part of Sundanese identity.
"Pasantrén minangka ruang nilai"	"The pesantren as a space of values"	Cultural Identity	Religious and cultural values are integrated within institutional and social discourse.

The lecture reflects a sociopragmatic communication pattern that combines emotional closeness, moral education, and cultural identity within a religious setting. Humor, informal interaction, and respectful references to religious figures function as relational strategies that strengthen audience engagement and social legitimacy. Educational messages are delivered through spiritual narratives, personal experiences, and moral advice, reflecting the expressive and directive functions of language in persuasive communication. At the same time, Sundanese philosophical expressions are integrated with Islamic values, positioning the Sundanese language as a medium for transmitting both cultural and religious identity. These findings indicate that regional language preservation in religious digital

discourse becomes effective when cultural values are contextualized within spiritual and community-oriented communication practices.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Analysis of Kang Dedi Mulyadi's Sociopragmatic Communication Strategies in the Preservation of the Sundanese Language

The findings position Kang Dedi Mulyadi's (KDM) communication practices as a form of sociopragmatic strategy in which language operates simultaneously as a communicative, cultural, and symbolic resource. Across formal speeches, community interactions, and religious lectures, Sundanese is consistently employed to construct social relationships, deliver moral discourse, and reinforce collective identity. From a sociopragmatic perspective, these patterns reflect the relationship between linguistic choice, communicative intention, and social context. Sundanese is therefore positioned not merely as a regional code, but as a dynamic medium integrated into contemporary digital interaction.

The closeness strategy primarily emerges through greetings, humor, and dialogic interaction patterns. Expressions such as "daramang" and "tos taruang teu acan" function as phatic communication aimed at maintaining social solidarity and reducing interpersonal distance between speaker and audience. In community-based contexts, humor also operates as a mitigation strategy that softens criticism and creates a more egalitarian communication atmosphere. This pattern aligns with Alfikri's (2024) argument that KDM's communication style relies heavily on local cultural approaches to foster emotional connection with the public. However, compared to previous studies focusing mainly on leadership image, this study identifies the sociopragmatic mechanism underlying those interactions, particularly the role of phatic and expressive functions in sustaining audience engagement through regional language use.

Educational strategies in KDM's discourse are reflected through directive speech acts delivered in persuasive and contextual forms. Advice concerning leadership, social responsibility, agriculture, spirituality, and self-reliance positions language as a medium for influencing public attitudes rather than merely transmitting information. The integration of personal narratives and analogical expressions strengthens the expressive and persuasive dimensions of communication. Ardila and Febria (2025) emphasize rhetorical persuasion through ethos, pathos, and logos, while Maharani et al. (2025) focus on the psychological effects of directive speech acts. This study extends those perspectives by showing how directive and expressive functions are embedded within culturally grounded Sundanese discourse to support both educational messaging and language revitalization.

The cultural and identity dimension is particularly visible through the recurring use of Sundanese philosophical concepts such as "silih asah, silih asih, silih asuh, sareundeuk saigel, and rasa jeung rumasa". Within cultural identity theory, these expressions function as symbolic markers that reinforce collective belonging and local worldview. The findings align with Nayiroh's (2020) observation that Sundanese cultural communication has become central to KDM's leadership style. Nevertheless, this study moves beyond political representation by demonstrating how cultural philosophy operates sociopragmatically as an identity construction strategy in digital discourse. Sundanese is therefore positioned not only as a linguistic symbol of ethnicity, but also as a performative medium through which cultural legitimacy and social values are continuously reproduced.

The communication patterns identified in this study also reflect adaptation to the interactive characteristics of digital media. YouTube enables Sundanese to circulate beyond traditional local domains and enter wider public communication spaces. Rosadi et al. (2022) emphasize the role of YouTube in strengthening KDM's personal branding, whereas Barokah et al. (2023) focus on framing strategies in shaping political image. In contrast, the present study highlights how digital communication contributes to regional language vitality by embedding Sundanese within emotionally engaging and socially relevant discourse. This positions digital media not only as a promotional platform, but also as a sociolinguistic environment where regional language practices can remain visible and socially meaningful.

At the same time, the findings reveal that KDM's communication strategies cannot be separated from political and performative dimensions. The use of Sundanese strengthens the image of leadership closeness and cultural authenticity, while simultaneously functioning as symbolic political branding. Suryakusuma et al. (2026) argue that representations of "the people" in KDM's discourse contribute to political legitimation, whereas Sarwoko (2025) emphasizes the role of social media content in shaping leadership perception. From a critical perspective, this raises questions regarding the extent to which regional language preservation is driven by cultural commitment or by strategic image construction. The popularity of emotionally charged and culturally symbolic discourse may strengthen language visibility, yet it also risks transforming local identity into a performative digital commodity.

This tension becomes more visible in the presence of spectacle and virality within KDM's communication practices. Melisa (2025) notes the use of dramatic and attention-oriented communication techniques, while Faturohman et al. (2025) highlight the disciplinary and viral dimensions of KDM's digital content. The phenomenon of "KDM phobia" identified by Setiawan et al. (2026) further reflects the psychological influence of repetitive digital discourse on audiences. From a sociopragmatic perspective, these patterns reveal that language functions not only as communication, but also as social influence and symbolic performance. Although such strategies contribute to increasing audience engagement with Sundanese, reliance on charismatic public figures also raises concerns regarding sustainability and broader community participation in language preservation efforts.

Overall, the findings suggest that KDM's sociopragmatic communication strategies integrate relational closeness, directive educational discourse, cultural identity construction, and digital performativity within a single communication framework. This study contributes to sociopragmatic scholarship by demonstrating how regional languages can be revitalized through adaptive digital communication strategies rooted in local cultural values and participatory interaction. At the same time, the findings highlight the ambivalent relationship between cultural preservation and political branding in digital spaces, where language simultaneously functions as cultural heritage, communicative strategy, and symbolic capital.

4.2.2 The Use of Sundanese in Kang Dedi Mulyadi's YouTube Content and Its Contribution to Fostering the Vitality of Regional Languages

The findings reveal that the use of Sundanese in Kang Dedi Mulyadi's (KDM) YouTube content functions not only as a communicative choice but also as a sociocultural strategy that reinforces regional language vitality in digital spaces. Across formal, communal, and

religious contexts, Sundanese is consistently integrated into emotionally engaging and socially contextualized discourse. From a sociopragmatic perspective, this pattern reflects how language choice is shaped by communicative goals, audience relationships, and cultural positioning. Sundanese is therefore positioned as an active linguistic resource capable of maintaining relevance within contemporary digital communication.

The persistence of Sundanese expressions in KDM's discourse reinforces the interpersonal function of language in sustaining social solidarity. Greetings, humor, and everyday conversational patterns create familiarity and reduce hierarchical distance between speaker and audience. In sociopragmatic terms, these utterances operate as phatic communication that maintains relational closeness within public interaction. Nayiroh (2020) emphasizes the importance of local cultural communication in strengthening community relations, whereas this study further demonstrates how phatic interaction simultaneously contributes to the normalization of Sundanese within digital public discourse. Regional language vitality is therefore supported not only through symbolic preservation, but also through repeated everyday usage in socially meaningful contexts.

The educational dimension of KDM's communication also contributes to language sustainability by embedding moral and social values into regional language discourse. Directive speech acts related to leadership, agriculture, spirituality, and social responsibility are delivered through culturally familiar expressions and personal narratives. This aligns with speech act theory, particularly the directive and expressive functions of language aimed at influencing audience attitudes and behavior. Ardila and Febria (2025) focus on rhetorical persuasion in KDM's speeches, while Maharani et al. (2025) highlight the psychological influence of directive discourse. The present study extends these findings by demonstrating that persuasive communication becomes more socially effective when conveyed through culturally embedded regional language practices.

The integration of Sundanese into digital communication also reflects an adaptive process through which regional languages negotiate visibility within modern media ecosystems. YouTube allows Sundanese to circulate beyond localized interpersonal settings and enter broader digital publics. Rosadi et al. (2022) interpret this phenomenon primarily through personal branding, whereas this study emphasizes its sociolinguistic implications. The repeated presence of Sundanese in viral and highly accessible digital content contributes to language normalization among wider audiences, including younger generations who increasingly consume digital media. In this context, digital communication functions not only as dissemination, but also as a mechanism for sustaining language relevance across generations.

The findings further suggest that Sundanese in KDM's content operates as a form of digital cultural identity construction. Philosophical expressions, agrarian narratives, and references to Sundanese social values reinforce collective belonging amidst the dominance of globalized digital culture. From the perspective of cultural identity theory, language serves as a symbolic marker that differentiates communities while reinforcing cultural continuity. Previous studies by Susanti et al. (2025) and Sarwoko (2025) focus on symbolic communication and leadership image construction. This study, however, highlights how identity construction through regional language simultaneously contributes to language revitalization by positioning Sundanese as culturally prestigious and socially relevant in digital interaction.

Nevertheless, the contribution of KDM's communication to language vitality also contains political and performative dimensions that require critical reflection. The use of Sundanese strengthens perceptions of cultural authenticity and populist closeness, but it may also function as symbolic political branding. Suryakusuma et al. (2026) interpret representations of "the people" in KDM's discourse as part of political legitimization strategies. From this perspective, regional language use can simultaneously operate as cultural preservation and strategic image construction. While such visibility increases public exposure to Sundanese, it also raises concerns regarding whether language revitalization remains community-driven or becomes increasingly dependent on media-oriented political performance.

This tension is reinforced by the spectacle-oriented nature of digital communication. Melisa (2025) identifies dramatic and attention-centered elements in KDM's media practices, while Faturohman et al. (2025) emphasize the disciplinary and viral dimensions of KDM's content. From a sociopragmatic perspective, these patterns reveal how language in digital media functions as symbolic performance capable of shaping emotional and social responses. The popularity of Sundanese discourse in KDM's content therefore reflects not only linguistic preservation, but also the influence of algorithmic visibility and audience engagement culture within digital platforms.

Despite these complexities, the findings confirm that the strategic use of Sundanese in adaptive digital communication contributes significantly to maintaining regional language vitality. Emotional closeness, educational narratives, cultural symbolism, and participatory interaction collectively position Sundanese as a living language within contemporary digital spaces. This study contributes to sociopragmatic research by demonstrating that regional language revitalization is more sustainable when language is integrated into everyday communication practices rather than limited to ceremonial or institutional preservation efforts.

4.2.3 The Linguistic Features of Kang Dedi Mulyadi's Speech in YouTube Content and Support for the Preservation of the Sundanese Language

The findings reveal that the linguistic features of Kang Dedi Mulyadi's (KDM) discourse function as sociopragmatic mechanisms that support the preservation of the Sundanese language within digital communication. The consistent use of Sundanese across formal speeches, public interactions, and religious lectures positions the language as an active communicative resource rather than a symbolic cultural artifact. From a sociopragmatic perspective, these linguistic patterns reflect the interaction between language choice, communicative intention, and social context. Sundanese is therefore positioned not only as a marker of ethnicity, but also as a medium for constructing social relationships, transmitting values, and maintaining cultural visibility in digital spaces.

One prominent linguistic feature is the use of greetings and dialogic interaction patterns. Expressions such as "daramang" and "tos taruang teu acan" function as phatic communication aimed at maintaining social solidarity and interpersonal closeness. In Sundanese communicative culture, relational politeness and familiarity are central components of social interaction. This aligns with Nayiroh's (2020) argument that local cultural communication strengthens relationships between leaders and communities. However, this study further demonstrates that phatic expressions also contribute to the

normalization of Sundanese in public digital discourse by embedding regional language into everyday interaction patterns that audiences perceive as natural and accessible.

Humor also emerges as a significant sociopragmatic feature within KDM's discourse. Rather than functioning solely as entertainment, humor operates as a mitigation strategy that softens criticism, reduces communicative tension, and enhances audience receptiveness. In several contexts, humorous expressions are combined with moral or social commentary, allowing criticism to be delivered indirectly without threatening social harmony. Melisa (2025) interprets this dramatic communication style as part of digital spectacle, while Faturohman et al. (2025) emphasize its disciplinary effects on audiences. The present study expands these perspectives by identifying humor as a sociopragmatic strategy that strengthens emotional engagement while simultaneously increasing the social acceptability of Sundanese discourse in digital interaction.

Another important feature is the dominance of directive and expressive speech acts within educational narratives. Advice related to leadership, spirituality, agriculture, and self-reliance reflects the directive function of language aimed at shaping audience attitudes and behavior. Personal experiences and emotional narratives reinforce the expressive dimension of communication, making messages appear more authentic and persuasive. Maharani et al. (2025) focus on the psychological effects of directive speech acts, whereas this study highlights how directive discourse delivered through Sundanese strengthens the communicative relevance of regional language in contemporary society. Educational messages therefore become not only moral instruction, but also mechanisms for maintaining the functional use of Sundanese in public discourse.

The findings also highlight the importance of cultural symbolism in KDM's linguistic practices. Sundanese philosophical expressions such as "silih asah, silih asih, silih asuh, sareundeuk saigel, and rasa jeung rumasa" operate as symbolic representations of collective identity and local worldview. From the perspective of cultural identity theory, these expressions reinforce a shared sense of belonging while transmitting social values across digital audiences. Susanti et al. (2025) interpret KDM's communication style as culturally symbolic, while Suryakusuma et al. (2026) emphasize its role in constructing collective representation. This study extends these interpretations by showing that symbolic cultural expressions also function as linguistic preservation strategies through repeated circulation in digital communication.

Digital media further amplifies the sociolinguistic impact of these linguistic features. The interactive and highly visible nature of YouTube enables Sundanese expressions to reach audiences beyond traditional local settings. Rosadi et al. (2022) and Sarwoko (2025) primarily discuss social media in relation to branding and public perception, whereas the present study emphasizes the role of digital discourse in expanding the functional domain of regional language use. The repeated exposure of audiences to Sundanese greetings, humor, philosophical concepts, and educational narratives contributes to the creation of a participatory linguistic environment in which regional language remains socially visible and culturally meaningful.

At the same time, the findings reveal tensions between cultural authenticity and performative digital communication. Emotional narratives, humor, and symbolic cultural expressions strengthen audience engagement, yet they also risk transforming regional language into a form of performative media spectacle. The phenomenon of "KDM phobia"

identified by Setiaman et al. (2026) illustrates how repetitive emotional discourse can generate strong psychological effects on audiences. From a critical sociopragmatic perspective, this raises questions regarding whether the popularity of Sundanese discourse in digital media reflects sustainable language revitalization or temporary visibility shaped by charismatic media performance and algorithmic circulation.

Overall, the linguistic features identified in KDM's YouTube discourse reflect the integration of phatic, directive, expressive, and symbolic functions within digital communication practices. Greetings, humor, educational narratives, and cultural philosophy collectively position Sundanese as a living and adaptive language capable of functioning within contemporary media environments. This study contributes to sociopragmatic scholarship by demonstrating that regional language preservation becomes more sustainable when linguistic features are embedded within emotionally engaging, culturally grounded, and socially participatory communication practices.

5. Conclusion

This study identified sociopragmatic strategies employed in YouTube content to support the preservation of the Sundanese language. The findings demonstrate that Sundanese is consistently integrated into educational discourse, relational closeness, and cultural identity construction. Greetings, humor, personal narratives, and Sundanese philosophical values indicate that the language can be effectively adapted to a variety of formal and informal communicative contexts. Consequently, Sundanese functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a vehicle for cultural transmission and preservation. The study highlights relational, educational, and cultural identity strategies as key sociopragmatic mechanisms that contribute to regional language revitalization in digital spaces. Furthermore, it contributes to sociopragmatic scholarship by demonstrating how digital public figures can promote linguistic and cultural preservation through the strategic use of regional languages.

Nevertheless, this study is limited to the analysis of three YouTube videos and does not include a thorough examination of audience responses. Consequently, the findings provide only a partial understanding of how the use of the Sundanese language influences audience reception. In addition, the generalizability of the findings is constrained by the focus on a single public figure. The long-term sustainability of language preservation efforts also remains uncertain because such initiatives may depend heavily on the visibility and influence of individual actors. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted within these limitations and may serve as a foundation for future studies focusing on comparative analyses of regional languages, audience reception, and cross-platform digital communication.

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