

“*Matur nuwun*”: The Value of Javanese Politeness in Corpus Web Application

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Abstract. *Matur nuwun* is an expressive utterance in Javanese used to convey certain psychological feelings to speech partners. The existence of a particular purpose in an utterance indicates the pragmatic function of the use of an utterance. In using *matur nuwun*, there are also used to end a conversation. In the previous studies, *matur nuwun* were included in the type of phatic utterance that serves to keep the communication between speakers persist. But, in the initial observation of the data was found that *matur nuwun* has another function, which is establishing harmony. It means, there are still some usages of *matur nuwun* which need to be explained. This research aims to find the function and use of *matur nuwun* in Javanese. The data are taken from the corpus of Javanese in corpus web application <https://korpus.ui.ac.id/>. The processing of corpus data is performed by using antconc (word processing application). The discussion of the function and usage of *matur nuwun* in this study is conducted with politeness theory. The results of this study prove that the use of *matur nuwun* in utterance is not only as phatic expression, but also used to maintain the balance and social relations between speakers.

Keywords: *matur nuwun, corpus analysis, politeness, language use, social relations*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Javanese are known to be small-talkers. The existence of *sungkan* ‘reluctant’ concept in Javanese culture causes them to make small talk [1]. Small talk is a way to keep one's social relationship with others. This is in accordance with one of language functions of maintaining social relationships for the community of its speakers [2]. The expressive utterance is one of the utterances used to maintain that social relationship [3]. Expressive utterance is the utterance used to convey the speaker's feelings to the speech partner [4].

Matur nuwun is one of expressive utterance form to express speaker's feeling in Javanese. In English, *matur nuwun* has the same role as gratitude. The utterance is used to express feelings to others for having made a certain advantages [5]. However, *matur nuwun* is not only used to convey feeling for the advantages obtained, but also used to refuse the request of speech partner. It shows the existence of another function of *matur nuwun* utterance. This research focuses on

the function and usage of *matur nuwun* in Javanese. In this matter, the functions and usage are obtained through the corpus of Javanese. Thus, the function and usage of *matur nuwun* by Javanese society in general can be found. Through Javanese language corpus data, the use of Javanese by its speakers can be observed objectively.

The use of *matur nuwun* utterance to convey a particular purpose indicates the pragmatic function of an utterance. In this case, an utterance is not only used to express something but also to do something [6]. The utterance spoken has a purpose to maintain social relations between speakers. Speak with great politeness is a way to create a harmonious social relationship [7]. As it is known that eastern culture always upholds ethics and politeness in communication [8]. *Matur nuwun* as one of expressive utterance form marks the intention of politeness of an utterance. This research tries to explain how *matur nuwun* is used to talk to the speech partner. The approaches of politeness is used to elaborate the use of *matur nuwun* to maintain the self-image of speech partner [9].

2. RELATED WORKS

Matur nuwun were included in the type of phatic utterance that serves to keep the communication between speakers persist, [10], [11]. Both studies used direct observation toward speakers. Observations on the use of phatic speech in Javanese in language practices among families were conducted in Magelang, Rembang, and Purbalingga [10]. Meanwhile, observations were made in Klaten, Sukoharjo, Boyolali, and Sragen, but the observatory techniques were explained [11]. Based on the data collection methods of both researches, it can be seen that both observe the use of phatic utterances limited to certain areas. This means that the scope of data in both researches is limited, since Javanese is a language used not only in Central Java, but also in some areas in West Java and East Java. In addition, the two researches are still generally discussing phatic utterance in Javanese, not discussing *matur nuwun* specifically. If *matur nuwun* is part of phatic sentence, then *matur nuwun* has functions, one of them, to keep communication between speakers still take place. However, *matur nuwun* is also used to end a talk, for example in a speech. Thus, there are still other functions and uses of *matur nuwun* that need to be explained. These matters become the starting point in this research. Through the wide coverage of Javanese corpus data, the research may illustrate the use of *matur nuwun* based on its use in society more objectively. Corpus linguistics is a representation of the use of language from a society [12].

3. METHOD

This research utilizes the data of Javanese corpus in corpus web application <https://korpus.ui.ac.id/>; the collection of Javanese (written forms) sources in printed media from various regions in Java dated from 1950 until 2010. In that corpus there are approximately four million words. This research uses word processing application antconc. Through the application, a list of words from the Java language corpus may be derived. Based on the word list derived, the researcher chooses *matur nuwun* phrase. To observe the use of *matur nuwun*, the researcher uses the concordance feature to see the context of *matur nuwun* usage. Thus, it can be known how the use of *matur nuwun* in the corpus of Javanese.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data processing results by using antconc application, the use of *matur nuwun* utterance in Javanese corpus found as many as 860 times. In the corpus, *matur nuwun* is used to convey particular things in addition to convey expression to the speech partner that has given advantage to the speaker. The following is the use of *matur nuwun* in Javanese.

4.1. The Variations of Usage of *Matur Nuwun*

In its use, *matur nuwun* has several variations of form, such as *matur suwun*, *suwun*, *nuwun*, *matur nuwun*, and *panuwun*. The following table shows the occurrence frequency of variation of form of *matur nuwun*.

Table 1. The Form Variations of *Matur nuwun*

No	Variation of form	Frequency
1	<i>matur nuwun</i>	423
2	<i>Panuwun</i>	378
3	<i>Nuwun</i>	25
4	<i>suwun</i>	19
5	<i>matur suwun</i>	15

In Table 1, it appears that the use of variation of *matur nuwun* form has diverse frequency. *Matur nuwun* form has the highest frequency. It is because *matur nuwun* is a form that can be used to speak with anyone, in any context of situation, and any speech level. *Matur nuwun* can be used to talk with friends of the same age or older, in formal and informal situations, as well as in *krama* and *ngoko* speech level. In contrast to *panuwun*, despite its high frequency, *panuwun* only appear when used to talk to unequal friends (more honorable), in formal situation context, and in *krama* speech level. *Panuwun* frequently appear in speech discourse and forewords in book. The variations of *nuwun* and *suwun* have a low frequency of occurrences because they appear only when used to talk with equivalent speakers and in informal situations context. These forms usually appear in daily conversations context on informal situations. Furthermore, the most rare form appears is *matur suwun*. This form can be used in various contexts with both equal and unequal speakers, formal and informal, as well as in *krama* and *ngoko* speech level. However, the form is only used in particular areas [13].

4.2. *Matur Nuwun* as an Expression of Receiving Advantages

Matur nuwun utterance is used to convey expression toward the speech partner for giving advantages to speakers. The use of *matur nuwun* to express the intention above is observed through the context of the utterance. The advantages can be in a form of goods, information, and assistance given by the speech partner. In addition, *matur nuwun* also found as a form of gratefulness to God.

Table 2. The Use of *Matur nuwun* because The Speaker Has Received Advantages

No	UTTERANCES	CONTEXT	ADVANTAGE
1	<i>Matur nuwun, Bu. Bonekane lucu banget</i> ' <i>matur nuwun</i> , Mom, the doll is so cute'	the speaker bought a doll by her speech partner	Doll
2	<i>Bu guru maringi buku Udi matur bu guru</i> <i>matur nuwun</i> <i>bu guru</i>	the speaker is given a book by the speech partner	Book

	‘The teacher gives book to Udi, <i>matur nuwun</i> ’		
3	<i>Matur nuwun awit bapak kersa maringi katrangan ingkang jangkep</i> ‘ <i>matur nuwun</i> because you have been willing to give full details’	the speaker has been fully informed by the speech partner	Information
4	<i>Aku matur nuwun banget karo kowe, cil merga wis ngandhani</i> ‘I (thank) <i>matur nuwun</i> you very much, cil, because you have told me’	the speaker is told not to close to something called as ‘ <i>Wedhus</i> ’	Information
5	<i>Ari lan Arga banjur matur nuwun karo Eka amarga dheweke wis mbiyantu ngrampungke masalahe wong loro kuwi mau</i> ‘Ari and Arga say (thank) <i>matur nuwun</i> to Eka because she has helped to solve their problem.’	the speaker felt that he has been assisted by the speech partner to solve problems	Assistance
6	<i>Kula matur nuwun sanget sedaya bantuwanipun</i> ‘I (thank) <i>matur nuwun</i> you very much for your assistance’	the speaker felt that he has been assisted by the speech partner	Assistance
7	<i>Dhuh Gusti! matur nuwun Gusti!</i> ‘Dear God, <i>matur nuwun</i> ’	because He has warned and gave guidance to her son	<i>hidayah</i> (God’s guidance)
8	<i>Ing batin banget matur nuwun marang Kang Akarya Jagad .</i> ‘in the deepest heart, <i>matur nuwun</i> (thank) to the Creator’	for being granted by God	God’s grace

The above utterances are examples of the use of *matur nuwun* to express gratitude to the speech partner for giving advantages to the speakers. This can be observed through the context of the utterance. In Utterance 1 and 2, *matur nuwun* function as an expression of appreciation because the speaker has been given a doll by the mother. In addition to expressing gratitude (receive something), *matur nuwun* also used because the speech partner has given information to the speakers. The word *katrangan* 'description' in Utterance 3 and 4 indicates that the speech partner has provided the information to the speaker. Utterances such as *ngandhani* and *katrangan* indicate the existence of information conveyed by friends to the speaker. In Examples 5 and 6 indicate *matur nuwun* is used when speakers have received advantages from the speech partner (in a form of assistance). The words *biyantu* 'assistance' and *bantuwan* 'help' indicate that the speaker has received assistance from the speech partner. Besides being used to talk to friends, *matur nuwun* is also used to express gratitude to God. In the above utterance, it appears that *matur nuwun* is uttered to express gratitude to God. The words *Gusti* 'God' and *Kang Ngakarya Jagad* 'the Creator of universe' in Utterance 7 and 8 are words that refer to God.

Based on this, it can be seen that *matur nuwun* is used to express speaker’s feeling who have received an advantages. In the context of the use of *matur nuwun* as an expression of thankfulness, there are several types of advantages that cause the use of the expression. These benefits can be material and non-material. The material benefits that appear in the data are *boneka* (puppet), *uang* (money), *buku* (book), and so on. Then, for non-material benefits are information and assistance. Based on this, it can be seen that *matur nuwun* is a form of expressive speech acts used to express a particular psychological attitude to a situation [14]. In

this case, the referred state is the state when the speaker feels the advantages from the speech partner. In addition, *matur nuwun* is also used to express gratitude to God. In this matter, the speaker feels that he has received particular grace from God, and then he expresses the utterance. Thus, it can be recognized that *matur nuwun* function as a form of gratitude over the obtained advantages by speakers.

In the context of speech that results in profit and loss, there are a scale of profit and loss in a communication [7]. The more profits gained by the speakers from the speech partner, the more impolite the utterance. *Matur nuwun* utterance above indicates that speaker gets certain benefits from the speech partner, and the speech partner is in loss condition. It means that the action performed by speaker is considered impolite. Therefore, *matur nuwun* is uttered to compensate for such losses. In this matter, *matur nuwun* function as an expressive form to praise the speech partner. Increasing the praise to speech partner is one of the politeness strategies in speaking [7]. Thus, as if between speaker and speech partner are gaining advantages each other.

4.3. *Matur Nuwun* as an Expression to Refuse Offer

Besides being used to convey gratitude of the benefits obtained, *matur nuwun* is also used to convey refusal of the speech partner's offer.

Table 3. The Use of *Matur nuwun* to Refuse Offer

UTTERANCE	CONTEXTS
<i>Matur nuwun pak, boten usah. Punika kalawau namung ngleresi kula manggihaken</i> ' <i>matur nuwun</i> Sir, no need. It was just a coincidence'	The speech partner intends to give rewards to the speaker for having found his wallet but the speaker refuse the gift
<i>Matur nuwun, ora perlu repot.</i> ' <i>matur nuwun</i> ' no need to bother'	The speech partner offers to make a drink, but it is being refused by the speaker
<i>Matur nuwun, kula sampun nedha</i> ' <i>matur nuwun</i> I have eaten'	The speech partner invites to a dinner, however the speaker refuses
<i>Boten usah Pak. Saestu. Matur nuwun</i> 'No need sir. (I) truly. <i>matur nuwun</i> '	The speech partner has been assisted by the speaker, so he wants to give money. However the speaker tries to refuse it

The above utterances show the use of *matur nuwun* to refuse something. The words that indicate the refusal are *boten* 'no need' and *ora perlu repot* 'no need to bother'. In other forms, in the third utterance also shows refusal. Referring to the context of the utterance, the speech partner invites the speaker to eat, but then answered by the speaker with *kula sampun nedha* 'I have eaten'. It has relevance as a refusal because it indicates that the speaker has eaten, so the speaker is full. Because the speaker is full, then he does not want to eat anymore. Thus, the speaker indirectly refuses the invitation to eat.

Based on this, it can be known that *matur nuwun* also appear to reject something from speech partner. Unlike the previous discussion, in the context of *matur nuwun* used to refuse the offer does not involve the state of profit and loss, because both speaker and hearer do not feel disadvantaged over anything. In this context, what is considered in the speech event is the concept of self-image between speakers. When speaker refuse a gift or offer from speech partner, it means that the speaker does not follow the speech partner's desire. These conditions threaten speech partner's self-image. In this case, the speaker threatens the positive face of speech partner. Positive face refers to a person's desire to always be respected for every desire

he has [9]. A threat to self-image or face is an impolite act. Therefore, *matur nuwun* is used to reduce the threat. Through the utterance, the speaker tries to make perception that the speaker understands the speech partner's desires and appreciate the giving or offer. Thus, the potential threat of face can be reduced, so the speech partner feels safe about the refusal.

4.4. *Matur Nuwun* as The Closing of Talks

Matur nuwun is not only used to express the expression of gratitude and refusal but also used to end a discourse, such as speech or lecture discourse.

*Makaten para rawuh kakung putri, andharan ringkes ingkang saged kula aturaken.
Mbok manawi wonten andharan saha atur ingkang kirang prayogi, wontena kepareng
panjenengan paring pangapunten ing kula....*

Matur nuwun,

Wassalaamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.

'Dear the audience, that's all the brief explanation that I can convey. If in the delivery and explanations there was something unpleasant, hopefully you are pleased to give apology to me...'

'matur nuwun'

'Wassalaamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.'

The above utterance is an example of the use of *matur nuwun* to close a speech. *Matur nuwun* in that context marks the end of a discourse delivered by speaker [15]. In this case, the utterance is not related to the concept of profit-loss and self-image between speakers. Therefore, *matur nuwun* in speech discourse is used solely to close or end a speech.

5. CONCLUSION

The result of corpus analysis in this research proves that the use of *matur nuwun* in utterance is not only to keep a communication persists (phatic), but *matur nuwun* is also used to maintain balance and social relationship among its speakers. *Matur nuwun* is the speaker's psychological expression of a state in a speech event. There are various forms of *matur nuwun* whose usage depends on the context of each situation (*empan papan*). *Matur nuwun* utterance is used to realize politeness in communication for Javanese. *Matur nuwun* as an expression to indicate that speaker has earned advantages is a manner to maintain balance in a speech event so that no one feels harmed. By balance, the social relationships between speakers remain harmonious (*guyub rukun*).

The form of politeness through *matur nuwun* also appears when speaker uses it to refuse the giving or offer from speech partner. The use of *matur nuwun* in the utterance of refusal is a manner to keep a speech partner's self-image, so he feels safe and not threatened. Thus, the speech partner feels that his desire is still appreciated (*memangun karyenak tyasing sasama*).

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