

EXAMINING THE ROLE OF LINGUISTIC REGISTER TO ANALYSES DISCOURSE ON SPORTS: CASE TO VISUALIZE CHATting ON FACEBOOK BY PAKISTANI SUPPORTERS OF CRICKET MATCH

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ABSTRACT:

Study focused to investigate the use of specific lexical items to comment on sports in social media applications. For this, the application of Facebook was taken to observe comments of Pakistani cricket supporters. The study is designed to first identify, then discuss actual and situational meanings of semantic structures that have been solely employed for cricket matches. It was possible with the adoption of the model of analyzing the semantics of lexis given by Geeraert's (2009). The project is designed on descriptive (survey). Corpus from the commentary section on Facebook was taken that comprised 4 chats on Facebook and (24) chats on sub-pages of Facebook. They were all coded from 1-24 as (C1 to C-24). The following chats have been carefully extracted to fulfill the purpose of the study in the platform groups of Facebook. They were visualized under principles to find the semantics of lexis through the proposed model (2009) of Geeraert. The findings of the project revealed that Pakistani supporters of Cricket have employed peculiar words and structures that verified specific interactions in the sports domain. Following phrases and words were possible to get interpreted with defined context. This has been concluded in the present study that chats on the Facebook application by Pakistani supporters of cricket have used the majority of sentences that were aligned to sports' register and could only be understood as well employed by fans of cricket. This contribution tends to suggest in the end that following the framework of the following study, many studies on the relationship of sports with the use of language can be presented by research scholars in the future from different parts of the World with the employment of theory on the register of language by Halliday (1978).

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1. Introduction:

Weapon of language is crucial to define various human feelings, societal philosophies, specific thoughts and the innovative ideas. According to Sapir (1921) language has been defined as completely a phenomenon attached to humans and defined through language itself. Further stated that lingual code is humanized as well as non-instinctive way to communicate thoughts, feelings and the wants through symbols produced voluntarily. Therefore, significance of language in overall lives of humans is not avoided. Humans tend to use it in almost all phases of their lives. According to Kadiri and Ekwueme (2020) basic drive of exchange of lingual code has been the communication. It is through this exchange, communication is actively perceived. Exchange of lingual codes between two or three individuals is known as conversation. As layman perceives it, exchange of internal opinions between people, when they set to talk. Therefore, Ten Have (1999) further adds to this definition, as conversation tends to avoid circumstances in complete vacuum. It requires context with peculiar number of participants in order to continue exchange of codes, though it may be irrespective to goals.

It is through this exchange of words that assist people to interact on different domains of life. It may be to analyze political situation of country, transaction of business affairs, pass comments on different sport matches, to instruct in different academic institutions, to present socialization between family friends and enlarge circle of friendship. It shows that language does tend to serve different objectives from different perspectives. Similarly, individuals tend to serve language differently to encounter various environmental-social issues. Holmes (2007) stated that language do vary from purpose of users, where used, with whom and others who are encountered in general. This can be visualized through purposeful insight of language in different occupational fields. Language employed in aviation is different to language of law.

Similarly, registers vary in different contexts, register of political talks differ to register used in holy places, like Mosques, Temples and Churches. Chukwudile (2020) stated that it is through lingual codes that significant aspects of different disciplines are presented differently. They could be studies in literature, legal proceedings, medicine, engineering, sports and arts. The argument put forwarded by Chukwudile (2020) expressed that use of lingual codes have been particularized. It is because; users of language have different purposes to serve. They can consider various choices of jargons and registers that could represent specific field. This representation creates a sense of solidarity amongst colleagues and similarly a distance with non-colleagues. Fromkin and Rodman (1998) referred it stylistics. Stylistics is particular usage of lingual code at demand of peculiar context. According to Simpson (2004), it is particular technique for interpretation of various types of texts that a language tends to assign. In liberal statement, it is denotation of style. The style itself has been relative in many ways. This encounters for particular way to do things. As, Austin (1962) stated in contribution that speaker tends to act with given set of words. Notion of "*speech acts*" was propounded by Austin (1962) to constitute specific manner through choices of linguistic items. The various kinds of registers as well stylistics have been synonymously used and sometimes interchangeably. The registers have been defined on stages of formality in writings. Nurani (2014) identified register as one of the many varieties in use. Halliday (1989) further added to explain register in simple terms as what one speaks at specific time, it depends on what one does, as well overall nature involved in performing one activity. It is register that is referred to arranging word series to form phrases that have been associated to particular contextual variations in terms of defining field, the discourse through mode and tenor (Halliday & Hasan, 1989). Term of register tends to refer contextualized choice of grammar and lexis that have been made and depends on speakers to validate situation, define participants of events and part of lingual code to perform a function through discourse (Halliday

1989). Halliday defined two key types in order to explain change in lingual codes. It is either functional or societal. The dialects denote change in lingual code through regional change, and register defines change in lingual codes through performance of specific function. Hudson (1993) stated dialect of one be the register of other. Fromkin and Rodman (1998) viewed registers to be variant form of lingual series on basis of style and are appropriate to specific societal context. Hidayah (2018) extended the explanation as specific lingual pattern that has been set appropriate to listener and speaker. These all need to match with the occasion in order to state relationship. Leech and Short (2007) defined following relation as continuum from lexicon level to grammar within checklist of stylistics.

1.2. Purpose of Study:

The domain of sports have been a source of entertainment and proper development of mind, as it has kept whole world fully engaged with it. Young generation have pure love to get themselves involved in different activities. There have been different studies that demonstrated youths to present passion of sports, specifically cricket. According to Tansey (2013), one important aspect that gives cricket an importance on international level is its passion attached to it. The fans of cricket tends to practice similar course of passion for cricket, irrespective to what their societal status is, where they have been, either in field, shopping centers, or visualizing the matches online at homes and etc. This overall passion has been expressed with utility of specific lingual exchange. The passion has been manifested through various types of debatable arguments between Pakistani cricket fans that are engaged before the start of match, during the match and at the end of matches. Arguments could have been offline or the online. Fans tend to put themselves in arguments concerning live matches of cricket that shows their full involvement in match played and televised through live broadcast system. The examples of debatable arguments is highlighted to show concerns of fans in favor or against to players in field, the actions of wicket

keeper, best ODI innings scores by players, best and even worst fielding performances, high scorer in short span of career by any player, highest wicket taker, and so the list continues on. It is based on the hot debates and contestation of participants in cricket game that present rise of its fans all around the world. These hot debates are irrespective to off/on line proceeding of live broadcast cricket matches. It goes on to days of matches with actual action of watching it live. This has been observed through particular choices of lingual items that each of the debate between cricket fans tends to represent variant form of language used for cricket sports as actual sense. Even fans of cricket have been observed to give support to their arguments with peculiar use of words in relation to define live match of cricket. This have been crucial in discourse of sports (Cricket) that not much focus have been paid on registers that are used in defining sport matches (i.e. Cricket) in chat – commentary boxes of Pakistani fan supports on Facebook. It is so; present project tends to analyze linguistic elements in depth that are utilized in chat-commentaries for cricket matches. This will assist to know peculiar lingual style used by fans for their favorite sports. This can even help to fill gap and can contributes for future research.

1.3. Problem Statement of Project

Research within field of sports in relation to language has been an age-old as its discourse, since last many years. This has gained attention of linguistic scholars that examined stylistic as well structural investigation pragmatically within print version of media. Scholars have tried to contribute about overall structure as well nature of various kinds of sports on announcements that are televised. However, some devised other techniques to analyze various strategies in conversation of commentators or the fans on sports. It tends to reveal a particular pattern of turns in talks that have been allocated for each speaker to construct during conversations. It has been a contribution on large extend to give proper attempt of varied research types onto registers utilized in sports during chat-commentaries on Facebook. However, to best of

author's knowledge, yet no proper investigation is carried to visualize different registers used for each of different sports type by Pakistani supporters of Cricket matches. Therefore, a little contribution on part of researcher is carried to devote the following gap in previous researches.

1.4. Aim and Objectives of Research Project

Study aimed to analyze particular elements of language for sports that have been used by Pakistani fans as the cricket supporters. Following this, objectives of study are defined below:

1. Recognition of structural and lexical elements that have been particularly utilized for cricket game by the Pakistani supporters in chat-commentaries at Facebook.
2. Defining to analyze semantics of peculiar lexis at contextual and actual terms with application of theory of Geeraert's (2009).
3. To present choice of lingual items to facilitate action of communication amongst its supporters.

1.5. Vitality of Project

It has been acknowledged that the domain of sports has its own specific language and its register in general tends to connote all terminologies under its usage. Though, following project is a small contribution on part of author, therefore, it may not include all the other related aspects of particular register usage in sports at larger level. Therefore, study has focused to limit its boundaries to define its use for cricket game. In simple terms, study has analyzed peculiar use of linguistic items by the cricket supporters on chat-commentaries in Facebook. However, with this aspect, no further investigation to analyze linguistic register of supporters on cricket matches in comments is made part of following project.

2. Review of Previous Literary Contributions

2.1. Studies to Highlight Relation of Sports and Language

Olagunju (2019) tried to investigate discourse of football matches with application of generic potential structure model of Ansary and Babai (2005). The contribution aimed to reveal

structure of discourse on football matches from contextual settings and newspapers. Around thirty articles have been selected that accounts for around one whole month. It comprised of around complete news on world cup 2010 series. This has been found with analysis that structure of discourse had eventual potential for increasing awareness of rhetoric in discourse of sports with skills to organize texts. On the other hand, Balzer-Siber (2015) had examination of different features of stylistics in function. It was visualized through analyzing discourse of sports on television as league of major soccer competition. It was aimed to find that whether lingual features had fulfilled functions of communications or they just fulfilled need to enhance stylistics in discourse. Result from findings presented that both stylistic as well lingual features that have been deployed within text include: inversion of subject dependence, expression of result, simplification of text, heavy textual modifier, diminutive types of elements, adverbs of deictic nature, deixis in discourse and taking the floor strategy. It was concluded by Balzer-Siber (2015) that alternations within viewership might have not spurred reconsideration for network reduplication, therefore, this might worth to monitor progress within interactions for announcers of sports. Similarly, Georgalou (2009) had contributed to write a paper on analysis of discursive excerpts from commentaries of sport in year 2004 for (Euro) tournament. This paper tried to present and reveal that how players, coaches of matches along with fans on national level are depicted with help of language. Paper has been anchored into framework of discourse-historical cadre. Result from findings revealed that casters of sports paid great support to their hometown players as well head-couches. Therefore, they increased their fans. From study, this has been concluded that social media have great influence on sports through generating, reinforcing and to disseminate the ideological hold on identities of nation. After review of above studies, following project has been related to one that has been reviewed earlier; however, the point of focus has been on cricket match textual analysis. Previous studies have tried to

ponder on stylistic as well discursive analyses of commentaries on football matches; however, present project will try to put a contribution to investigate lingual register of commentaries on cricket sports by focusing on chat-commentaries of Facebook application. For this, chat commentaries of Pakistani supporters of cricket match have been selected.

2.2. Adaptation of Framework for Project

Following study has been designed to analyze semantics of lexical items that have been propounded by Geeraert's (2009). This field is a section of lingual semantics that presents how different lexical items unite to give proper structure within language exchange. According to Geeraert (2009) this theory has been concerned for systematic work on meanings of words. Two significant queries that have been addressed to semanticists of lexical units are: a) through which mechanism, one can describe actual meaning of lexical item? b) How does meaning of lexical items change from one context to other?

The above two queries have been connected to each other. There have been enough descriptions to support account of meaning variations as well abilities to differently interpret with realization of context. Geeraert (2017), while descriptively taking an account of previous record tends to explain that fundamental topics under study in semantics of lexical units does involve either semantics in internal structure of lexis or relations of semantics occurring in vocabulary building. The earlier account tends to set a phenomenon that includes poly-semantic contrasts in terms of metonymy, proto-typicality, vagueness and metaphor. In second account, dominant course of topics tends to include lexical based fields, relations of lexis, metaphors of conceptual nature and metonymy as well frames. In addition to above arguments, Caplan (1987) have summarily stated semantics of lexical items involved coding within meanings of words. All above stated arguments tends to state critical role of semantics of lexis that plays to describe

structural and lexical based elements within lingual context. Therefore, following theory of Geeraert's (2009) seemed suitable to analyze discourses of communicative arguments with account of contextual variations. Study is focused to perceive lingual registers within event of cricket sports. Therefore, theory can assist to drive analysis.

3. Methodology of Project

Present project is qualitative in nature and employed a survey (descriptive). Survey is constructed through a proper collection and analyzing of data first from individuals in one group and secondly, few individuals have been considered as representative to whole group (Nwargu 2015). Data to analyze for finding the result of study had four commentary-chats from Facebook and (24) from sub-section chats of Facebook that have been coded with references as (C1-C24). Chats have been extracted from groups of Facebook. Names of Groups were *Pakistani Cricket Fans Official*, *Pakistani Cricket Fanatics*, *Pakistani Cricket Lover* and *Only Pakistani Crickets Pages Promotions*. Following groups of Facebook have been selected because these groups have large number of supporters of Cricket within Pakistan, connected either offline or online. The 24 sub-sectional chats were taken a screen shot with a purpose to analyze lingual features that have been associated to lingual exchange between Pakistani supporters on cricket sport matches. They all were first identified, then the excerpts were coded for purpose of analysis. These steps followed principle of Geeraert's (2015) theory to analyze semantics of lexical units.

4. Discussion based on Findings of Study Presentation of Data with Discussion

Chat Box: 1

C1: *I would rather say, Babar Azam has been far better to Hasan Ali...*

C2: Yes, to now upto..., even though you do not have to put an argument... yes, Babar has been a good player... but to now he is far better than Hasan Ali in ODIs. He does have good score and makes even better chances

C3: Babar Azam is considered better to Hasan Ali. In last previous matches against England, he scored around 150

C4: Yes, it is, but to score in best, does not consider for him as better to Hasan. Hasan have even scored as support against the England. He took wickets to support the country.

In Chat box 1, C1 wanted to confirm from C2 interlocutor that Babar Azam usually play better cricket than the Hasan Ali. C2 interlocutor in return to C1 even pointed that Azam does. There in chat box 1, it has been observed that C2 tried to select words carefully. Like *good score*, *better chances* and *good player*. On the other hand, C3 as well C4 have given the score and used the word support in order to present the situation of confidence that both players, Babar Azam and Hasan Ali did in record of their previous ODI matches, respectively. The particular vocabularies that have been employed by all four interlocutors tend to present the game of cricket. Following this principle, it can be perceived that a typical register has been selected to effectively communicate and with perfect harmony. Particular words like, *good player* in following context tends to connote that cricketer, who needs to perform well and appeal the sitting audience. As far, the antonyms of word 'good' is not to be taken to as the wicked or evil player, because of given context that tends to use given words within chat context. Therefore, the words, like *good score*, it stands to present as the player that creates better chances in future and his career. There is a word '*support*' in given context that chat itself does not means a kind of pillar support. It pretends to present apparently as taking the whole team on his shoulders. Word in a chat box intends to describe a situation that at the very crucial stage, he proved to work for the success of his team. His part was crucial in cause of winning the entire match against the England team. Therefore, word has

been used in chat as well easily comprehended by all interlocutors in chat box. There is a word '*chance*' that has been used to explain bright future ahead of the player. This has been observed even that following word could be used within language domain to refer to better position of player in future with positive progress or the profit assigned to the player.

According to Halliday (1990) that intended to refer the above mentioned double meaning words as closed kind of registers. It is because these vocabularies have even different kinds of meanings that could possibly fix to them in finite ways. From C1 to C4 chats, it has been perceived from chat-commentaries of Pakistani supporters that their expressions have reflected the cricket match truly. Though, few words have also been part of other various domains. Supporting this argument, Biber and Conrad (2009) stated that there is little pervasive kind of lingual elements that have not been completely unique to one given form of register. Some might occur to various other domains.

Chat Box 2

C5: He has been the skillful and legend, his sweeping shot stands superb, even though his clapping to support his team is excellent.

C6: Do you really mean, Muhammad Hafeez?

C7: Muhammad Hafeez. The player with a great form

C8: Player is always good. Even, he does have one goal to achieve.

C9: Is that the one, who batted well against the Bangladesh?

C10: oh...Yes, he batted well against. He has been an overall attacker; he is even given spell to bowl.

Chat Box 2 presents the chat of interlocutors from C5 to C10. The terminologies that specifically present cricket match have been discussed in this paragraph. The renowned player of Pakistani cricket team, Muhammad Hafeez is the topic of discussion in chat box 2. Words as well particular phrases that acknowledge cricket game have been deployed by the interlocutors. They are *sweeping shot, clapping, batted, attacker, spell* and *bowl*. The word, *clapping* is skillfully used by the interlocutor to present player's motivational

character in the field. It is one of the skills that players in field used to motivate other players to throw ball towards them quickly or to stop the ball hit hard against the batsman to the boundary. However, this word has been usually used through informal sense within conversation for cricket matches. However, interlocutors are well aware to comprehend actual societal impact to use it in chat. The phrase, *sweeping shot* has been generally utilized within various other language domains. It is even used when two persons are making a conversation, and one intends to change the topic of conversation, even the politicians use it against other political figures to target their negative motives in public. However, in cricket matches, this phrase signifies actual usage of term that player with the help of bat hits the ball in sweeping manner, just like the one who sweeps the floor. There is another phrase, *overall attacker*, as this stands directly against the actual meaning of the phrase. In order to comprehend the phrase fully, the reader needs to find contextual guesses against the said topic, the environment and the overall theme. The word *spell* is usually used differently. The word is utilized in negative essence in domain of magic. Therefore, these words can also be referred as polysemic in nature. Their meanings are multiple. Similarly, word '*batted*' is utilized in same fashion.

Chat Box 3

C11: *Muhammad Amir must not have to bench Wahab Riaz for too long. Guy has been good, however, needs even greater time.*

C12: *He has been earlier... however, not for now in team, he has been out of practice now completely.*

C13: *Wahab Riaz is observed dangerous that has bowled many in previous matches.*

C14: *Yeah, this may be the case; however, he equally went to concede even more bowled cases, because he failed for keeping sheets clean.*

C15: *Might be....haha...*

Chat Box 3 perceives chat of interlocutors from C11 to 15, the participants have used some of the words that described performance of cricket player in field. The words observed have been *bench*, *out of practice*, *bowled*, *matches*, and *sheets clean*. Word '*bench*' has been used as item that is verbal and used within sports context in order to express player that is in resting phase due to injury. However, '*bench*' have been utilized in profession of law for people who are mean that decides verdicts. This could also be the seat that is long and without any back, usually found within schools as well parks. Interlocutor C11 has put a choice of the following word to an assurance of person that has been addressed and can be comprehend amongst interlocutors. Furthermore, one of the prepositional structures, '*out of practice*' has been utilized within C12 that refers that actual performance caliber of player has been abysmal. This phrase is opposite to phrase '*into form*' and nearest to mean '*satisfactory performance*'. In similar fashion, word '*dangerous*' that have been used in C13 tends to describe bowler's attack to stop the runs on board or prevent batsman to hit the ball with a shot, so that they score well. Word '*dangerous*' has wider usages in real context. The example in medical scenario, if doctor uses the following same word that shows that patient has been no longer within dangerous situation and is all well. Therefore, its usage has been comprehended from casual to ordinary conversations depending on context. The words '*bowled*' and '*concede*' that have been used in C14 by the participant. It is unlike to political scenario, this has been used within context of sports that refers to score of one team is hidden with the score of other. Similarly, word '*bowled*' is utilized in political scenario by political figures to wash out the opposition agenda. Lastly, words, *sheets clean* does not refer to keep cloth or paper piece clean, however, it intends to present bowler's performance, who has the record of his career needs to keep sustainability. From C11 to C15, presents a clear register of cricket matches. Therefore, participants have tried to show levels to master specific register that could help to easily communicate with each other.

Chat Box 4

C16: *One can witness defense has become porous and so, Shoaib Malik has not helped in this regard at all*

C17: *You mean, to that? Even in recent, he is unable to mark his opponents*

C18: *All that he now best gives performance on is to pass balls between fielders on ground and try to achieve boundary*

C19: *Indeed... He needs to learn more skills to hit ball straight and tackle to slide ball at the back of keeper*

C20: *yes, this can be*

Chat box no 4, tries to perceive chat from C16 to C20. The following box of chat has found the specific words that have been commonly used for cricket sports. The words and phrases found are 'defense', 'mark opponents', ; 'pass ball', 'hit ball straight', 'fielders', 'boundary', 'back of keeper', and 'slide ball'. The defense has become porous means that in recent times, the overall performance of Shoaib Malik, the then, Pakistani all-rounder player have become poor. The peculiar selection of words present in chat shows that interlocutors are well aware of cricket sports. The choice of adjective phrases have been found, like, defense have become porous. Word *porous* has general meaning that refers to things that can be easily broken into parts, and here in this context, it refers to poor performance of player to defend his team. In C17, it has become more comprehensible, when it is stated that '*unable to mark his opponents*'. It refers to him that he badly failed to attack his opponents satisfactorily on ground. The phrases like, '*pass balls*' and to '*achieve boundary*' intends to express his capability and quality as player of cricket. The former phrase tends to suggest that he usually hit the ball in those areas on ground that misses a fielder and while to latter, the phrase suggests that as a batsman, he is keen to hit the ball hard to score a boundary. Participants have been observed to state that Mr. Shoaib Malik needs to develop his batting skills; one of them is to *hit the ball straight* to the fans successfully. The other phrase is *slide the ball back* to keeper is to hit

ball to the boundary from behind and taking or missing away the ball from wicket keeper at back of batsman. The above stated words and phrases that have been used by participants did successfully highlighted sports of cricket in order to explain it further.

Chat Box 5

C21: Mushtaq's formation as in earlier matches seems satisfactory

C22: He trained Babar Azam as batsman and Imam-ul-Haq

C23: Following effort have made his position strong as coach

C24: Yes... this has been... what it does assure that he can try to make his team win at home and at international grounds. It will be better, if gets least to draw back.

C21 to C24 have presented the chat of interlocutors at chat box 5. The words to describe performance of cricket coach are visualized in chat box 5 against Saqlain Mushtaq, the then, Pakistani cricket coach. His tactful skill to train Pakistani cricket team for international and national matches has been under discussion. Few of the words that describe attitude of coach are: *Formation, Train, home, international* and *draw back*. Following terms are even used in routine conversation. Example of the term, *formation* in C21 intends to describe the overall positive attitude of coach to form a team in general, taking all the responsibilities on his shoulders of entire team and the rest of participants in chat-commentary can easily comprehend it. Word '*Formation*' is generally used in other domains of lingual exchanges. It is also utilized in military context, or the production of materials. However, within context of cricket, it enabled interlocutors to conceive the essence of topic. The term '*trained*' utilized in C22 have been purely utilized for coach to properly manage his team, analyze the weak points and work to overcome it with fruitful performance in future of overall career of team. One that does not know the role of coach in team will fail to understand this phrase for coach. Therefore, true fans and followers of cricket can understand and practice the following terms successfully with demand of the context. However,

the foreigners of this contextualized usage of terms for cricket will fail to utilize the words and then even to understand it fully. These are specialized words that could only be understood, if one follows it. The words used in C24, *home* and *international* go with similar fashion. The layman will fail to perceive it in context of cricket. They will take the general meaning of word, *home*. They might even consider it that the cricket matches played in the residences. They are not aware of concepts taken into account for visiting and the host teams. The team is said to be visiting in context of cricket sports, if it visits any country to play the cricket match. Similarly, word, *international* is utilized with same perception. Host team is the team that plays on in own ground pitches. They do not have to travel internationally.

Conclusion

Peculiar selection of expressions as well lexis by commentators, seen above from chats in Facebook tends to present specific course of activities and attentions for Cricket game. In simple terms, commentators tend to employ particular structures and vocabulary that represent peculiar cricket domain. According to Keraf (2004), selection of particular vocab and expressions have inbuilt capability to mark differences in ideas with their own meanings. Thus, this tends to state about particular words that encounter particular context in correspondence to the feelings and insights of hearer. The chat- commentaries (24) were scrutinized and employed to sketch different topics related to cricket. Lexical items and sentences were stated vague, if their interpretation would not have been contextually defined. Therefore, role of situation to interpret discourse on cricket matches will never be avoided. In sum, project tried to contribute to recognize peculiar sentence structures and lexis that have been associated with cricket matches and Pakistani supporters to comment on Facebook. In second, project have discussed about peculiar word meanings that are applied on given situation through analyzing semantics of discourse and lexis by theory of Geeraert. Findings of study revealed that chats of Pakistani supporters on cricket matches have

been greatly affected by peculiar register for cricket (sports) comprehended through contextual usage. Therefore, project can be said to contribute in area of future research. Study can take many other insights for research in future based on chat- commentaries on Facebook through analysis of register of language in three sections (tenor, field and the mode).

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