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Interpersonal Meanings in Students And Teachers' Online Learning Interaction: Study of Systemic-Functional Linguistics

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Abstract

This study examines the interpersonal meaning in teachers and students interaction at Madrasah Aliyah Swasta (MAS) Medan in online learning process. The process of data analysis used functional systemic linguistic studies (LSF) to identify the interpersonal meaning of teachers and students through a sign system that can be analyzed based on language structure and language use. In addition, this study analyzes how the language used and organized regarding the grammar used. This study used a descriptive method through a qualitative approach. Sources of data was collected through field observation techniques in the form of teachers and students' speech acts and conversation transcripts in text messaging apps. The results of this study indicate the effects of speech function and speech partners as well as the influence of speech gender and addressee in disciplinary strategies at school. The findings in this study are about the interpersonal meanings of speech function of acknowledgment statements and contradictions which prove that there are various influences of disciplinary strategies in school based on the style of language used by teachers which are also determined by gender differences in interactions.

Keywords: Functional Systemic Linguistics; Interpersonal; Online learning

1. Introduction

Indonesia is currently still hit by the Covid-19 virus outbreak. Almost all parts of Indonesia are affected. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact, especially on education aspect in Indonesia. The Indonesian Ministry of Education announced that the implementation of learning in schools as usual will be abolished from March until now. With regard to eliminating the implementation of learning in schools, the only way to continue the learning process is through online learning. The implementation of online learning is one of the learning models carried out during the pandemic, because the principle of educational policy during the Covid-19 pandemic is to prioritize the health and safety of students, educators, education staff, families, and society in general, in order to fulfill educational services during the pandemic. The application of online learning certainly requires the readiness of various parties, both from the school, office holders, and the students themselves. Online learning can be carried out using an internet-based interactive model and Learning Management System (LMS), for example by using the WhatsApp, Google, Zoom, and others applications.

During this pandemic, using online learning certainly has an impact on teachers and students. One of the positive impacts is that teachers and students become more capable of using learning applications and the implementation of learning becomes more flexible because it can be carried out anywhere. In addition, the online learning model of course also has a negative impact on those who run it. Such as the occurrence of misunderstandings between teachers and teachers and students. This is because communication is done indirectly, only through social media or online learning applications used by teachers and students.

The existence of online learning creates a dilemma for the people who run it, especially for students and teachers. In online learning, teachers also have their own dilemma, namely regarding the interaction between teachers and students in terms of discipline in carrying out online learning. Discipline in this case is related to the rules that apply while online learning is still carried out between teachers and students both regarding rules, learning activities, and others. This interaction is like an example, sometimes there are students who do not complete the tasks given by the teacher, and even if they do, it is certainly difficult to ascertain whether it is the work of children or the work of others. In fact, the teacher has conveyed the rules or learning steps to the students.

In essence, every individual who grows and develops in a social environment is required to build relationships through interactions with other individuals. In practice, the interaction dynamics also occur in the form of the process of transmitting views, information or beliefs to other individuals. The interaction between teachers and students determines the quality of education. The extent to which students are able to understand and apply the material being taught cannot be separated from the delivery method and the competencies possessed by the teacher. That is, the overall quality of education begins with the quality of learning carried out by teachers.

Class discourse involving teachers and students is the use of language associated with science as a means of communication that aims to channel information in interacting in the classroom. Teachers and students interact with each other to achieve learning objectives. The interaction between teachers and students in the classroom is the main requirement for the teaching-learning process to take place.

Teachers are required to be skilled in teaching so that the learning process runs well. In teaching, the necessary skills are needed for the smooth and efficient teaching and learning process. The interaction between teachers and students can determine the style of learning which can be interactive, monotonous, boring and fun. The highest unit in class discourse is a lesson which consists of a series of transactions [20]. This is the same as the opinion of [21] which states that the forms of communication found in the classroom are very unique because of the forms of language used as a means to achieve learning goals.

In the interaction between teachers and students in the teaching and learning process there is an exchange of linguistic experiences which are represented in the function of experience. As stated by [5] that classroom activities are structured experiences and ideas related to classroom work are social practices. Teachers as actors in the classroom have a very important role, teachers must try to improve students' abilities in processing, finding, and using information in the context of students' self-development based on the context of their environment. This is confirmed by [21] that the use of language and interactive decision making affect student learning outcomes.

SFL (Systemic Functional Linguistics) concept describes in more depth through language metafunctions which are divided into three functions, namely ideational functions; textual function; and interpersonal function [11]. The ideational function is as an explanation of the speaker's thoughts, the interpersonal function is as an exchange of the speaker's thoughts, and the textual function is as a chain of experience or organization [8].

There are four main functions of language according to the SFL concept: (1) that language is functional, (2) functions in creating a meaning, (3) the meaning is influenced by cultural and social contexts, and (4) the process of using language is a semiotic process, namely the process of making meaning based on choice [6]. The use of language in every interaction that occurs between individuals serves as a shaper of the meaning of experience. That is, the use of language can regulate or organize the interpretation of experience so that the experience can be realized into a word [16].

Interpersonal meaning can realize the experience of a teacher and student to form good social relationships in interacting in the classroom. Interpersonal meaning is an interpretation of language in its function as an exchange of information called 'language as an activity' [18]. Interpersonal meaning consists of two, namely regarding the type of interaction that occurs and the type of goods exchanged; concerning the position of the message spoken by the speaker [2]. Thus, speakers create two types of roles or speech functions. The basic function of speech consists of two, namely giving and asking, whether a speaker gives something to the listener or a listener demands something from the speaker [10]. Based on the explanation above, the interpersonal meaning that occurs during the interaction between teachers and students can create students' thinking processes. For example, the use of modalities by speakers to determine the acceptability of messages during the teaching and learning process.

The interpersonal function that is the purpose of this study explains how language practice is aimed at: (1) displaying the identity and social role of each individual; (2) build and maintain relationships between individuals, and; (3)

influence the attitudes, views of individuals to each other. Then the interpersonal function is realized through interpersonal meanings [10].

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The interpersonal function has four actions which are referred to as protoaction. The four actions are statements, questions, offers, and orders. These terms refer to the concepts of speech function [10] and speech acts which are commonly used in formal grammar. In proto-action there is what is called the initial action and there is what is called the response action. The initial action is the fourth of these protoactions and the response action is a derivative of the initial action.

In interaction, each individual initiates each other and responds through the exchange of speech functions. The speech function is obtained from the pair of speech roles and the type of commodity. The choice of speech function as an initiator includes: (1) propositions, namely the exchange of information through the speech function of statements or questions, and (2) proposals, namely the exchange of goods and services through the speech function of offer or command. In addition, the speech function as a responder includes: (1) positive responses (expected) consisting of acknowledgment, answer, acceptance, compliance, rejection, refusal [11] By using the theory of Functional Systemic Linguistics (SFL) and Classroom Discourse Analysis theory, found the results of research from the conversation between teacher and student interactions in disciplinary strategies. The general findings obtained from the data analysis are (1) the distribution of speech turns and (2) variations in speech functions.

Based on the description that has been explained previously, this study discusses about classroom discourse in the process of interaction that occurs between teachers and students through the analysis of interpersonal meanings. The term class discourse is often associated with classroom language. The language used in the classroom context is a language that has its own characteristics from the languages used in other contexts. The main purpose of using language in the classroom is the transfer of knowledge. In the study of the relationship between knowledge and language, [10] states that language is not only a tool for expressing ideas from physical and biological processes, but one can also interpret experiences by transferring our experiences into meaning.

The realization of interpersonal meanings can vary with a combination of various social factors such as gender issues, tenor aspects (power, social distance, proximity), cultural contexts that place individual roles based on gender and hierarchy. Interpersonal meanings are the result of the interaction product of the involvement of the social aspects of individuals with their communicative situations which can show the level of intimacy and assessment of each other [9].

In this study, researchers recorded conversations that occurred between teachers and students through an online messaging application in the form of screenshots of conversations. Researchers also observed the behavior of the participants during conversations at school under several conditions. Focus of this study is about the interpersonal meaning of speech turn and the speech function of acknowledgment and contradiction statements which prove that there are various influences of disciplinary strategies in schools.

2. Riddle

This study used a descriptive qualitative method. This method is used to describe the interaction between teachers and students which is studied through SFL theory. One of approaches in the qualitative method is a case study. Qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written words obtained through the behavior of the people observed.

The data source is primary data, namely data obtained directly through direct observation (observation) at the location and interviews with research subjects. Sources of data used in this study were teachers and grade ten of MAS Plus Al-Ulum Medan's students. The secondary data used in this study include (a) documentation of conversations between teachers and students through text messaging apps such as Whatsapp; (b) written data from schools; and (c) a list of resources such as the internet, books, and literature that support research. This study uses an interview technique that is asking the respondents directly to obtain data. The interview was conducted with several teachers

who teach in grade ten of high school as well as the BK teacher who is in charge of the class in order to know the meaning of interpersonal between teachers and students in strategies to improve student discipline.

3. Results and Findings

The findings in this study are in the form of speech turns from the participants which indicate that there is an interaction in the speech turn process by involving participants as initiators and as responders.

3.1. Functions of Speech Statement, Acknowledgment and Contradiction

The function of speech statements is used to convey information. This speech function is based on the pairing of the role of giving (giving) with the commodity in the form of information. The positive response is acknowledgment which means the speaker agrees with the previous statement. On the other hand, the negative response is contradiction, which means the speaker denies the speaker's statement [11].

In data 1, female teacher (FT) responded to student who was late for attendance and collected the answer sheets' photos (LJK) during the midterm examination as follows.

- FT : *"Iqbal, kenapa kamu gak isi absen di WA dan tidak mengumpulkan LJK sama sekali?" (Question)*
 S : (a) *"Maaf Mi, tadi paket saya habis jadi saya beli dulu." (Answer)*
 (b) *"Masih boleh kirim LJK kan Mi?" (Question)*
 FT : (a) *"Cepat kumpulkan sekarang! Ummi kasih waku 5 menit." (Answer & Command)*
 (b) *"Janji kamu tidak mengulangi lagi yang seperti ini." (Statement)*
 S : *"Iya Mi saya janji." (Acknowledgment)*

In data 1, female teacher (FT) was asking about the reason why the student didn't fill the attendance list and sending the answer sheets' photos (LJK) through Whatsapp to the teacher even though the mid exam session had been completed, through the question speech function (line 1). Then the student (S) responded by explaining the reason for the delay (line 2a), then asked for permission to send the answer sheets' photos to the teacher by asking questions (line 2b). In lines 3a and b, the female teacher (FT) allowed student (S) to send the answer sheets' photos (command) while giving a warning to the statement as a disciplinary strategy at school. In the end, the student (S) gave a positive response with an acknowledgment to assure FT that he would not repeat his mistake.

The function of statement is important to maintain good communication between teachers and students. The most prominent interaction motive is the inclusion motive, which interacts to express oneself because they feel an interpersonal relationship and avoid loneliness (Punyanunt-Carter, 2005: 293).

The following data 2 shows a male teacher (MT) was asking a student's assignments.

- MT : *"Mana tugas kamu udah tanggal segini gak kamu kumpul juga?" (Question)*
 S : *"Iya Ustadz lagi saya kerjakan tapi belum siap Mi." (Answer)*
 MT : *"Mana janji kamu kemarin mau kumpul hari Senin kemarin tugasnya?" (Question)*
 S : *"Iya Ustadz, besok saya kumpul ya Ustadz." (Acknowledgment)*
 MT : (a) *"Kerjakan sekarang saya tunggu hari ini harus sudah dikumpul!" (Command)*
 (b) *"Saya kasih kamu waktu sampe pulang sekolah ya." (Statement)*
 S : *"Iya Ustadz." (Acknowledgment)*

Data 2 above shows the delivery of educative values from male teacher (MT) to the student (S) about being obedient to the agreement rules that have been mutually agreed upon. In the data, it can be seen that even though the student (S) wasn't doing the task, he was still obedient to male teacher (MT). This can be seen from the lack of contradiction in the answers given by the student (S). In addition, in this school there is a prototype attached to the male teacher (MT), namely as a "fierce teacher". A prototype is an embodiment of a concept that refers to denotation and can represent a type. Prototypes are also closely related to background knowledge wherever humans are [14].

The following data 3 shows a teacher was asking a student to wear a cap when submitting assignments to school.

- MT : *"Yang tidak memakai peci tidak diizinkan masuk ke ruangan ini." (Statement)*
 S : *"Maaf Ummi, saya lupa Mi." (Acknowledgment)*
 MT : *"Silakan cari peci dulu ya diluar!" (Command)*

S : “Baik Mi.” (*Acknowledgment*)

In data 3 above, it is about the treatment of masculine attitudes carried out by female teacher (FT) regarding the neatness of haircuts. This neatness value is an attitude with a masculine attitude based on the basis of rules at school. The speech function of the female teacher (FT) statement in line 1 shows the student (S) didn't wear a cap when submitting assignments to school, even though this rules had been written. In line 2, student (S) performs the initiation shown in its statement with the response. This happens because of the difference in hierarchical status between teachers and students. Students tend not to dare to fight the teacher. This can be seen from the minimal number of refusal speech acts spoken by students. close that question speech is used by female teacher (FT) to build closeness and strengthen interpersonal relationships with each other with the frequency of question speech functions (Litosseliti, 2006: pp. 25-28). In addition, FT tended to refine his speech even though it has the authority to convey speech in a typical form [15]. In contrast to male teacher (MT), who use more of the speech function (imperative clause) which is a typical form, it can strengthen the authoritarian attitude of men in interacting. While the speech function chosen by student (S) tends to use statements.

4. Conclusion

The result of this study shows the realization of interpersonal meanings between teachers and students in discipline strategies in schools by examining the interactions that occur between teachers (MT, FT) and students (S). The function of initiation speech that is mostly used by students is Acknowledgment, while those used by teachers are commands and questions. In terms of gender, female teachers dominate the speech more than male teachers. However, female teachers tend to refine their speech by increasing the question speech function. The responses given by students tend to be positive, because it can be seen from the absence of a refusal response. The interpersonal meaning of speech turns and the speech function of statements of acknowledgment and contradiction in this study prove that the style of language used by speakers and addressees which is influenced by gender differences has an influence on disciplinary strategies at school.

Based on the findings obtained, this study proposes several research recommendations. Due to the limitations of researchers in studying several participants in schools and through only one perspective, namely the interpersonal meaning of SFL theory. Research on classroom interaction discourse in the linguistic realm can still be developed more broadly in the speech analysis stage to critical discourse analysis.

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