

# Interpersonal Grammatical Metaphor in Teacher-Students Interaction in Kindergarten

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**Abstract.** This study examines the use of interpersonal metaphors in teacher talk at Panca Budi Kindergarten in Medan, through the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The research focuses on how teachers use interpersonal metaphors to shape classroom communication, guide interactions, and boost student engagement. Data were collected through classroom observations and audio recordings, followed by qualitative analysis. The results show that teachers strategically employ interpersonal metaphors to promote collaboration, assert authority, and encourage student participation, creating a more dynamic and inclusive classroom environment. This research investigates the use of interpersonal meaning in teacher talk within a kindergarten classroom, focusing on the various mood forms in declarative, imperative, and interrogative utterances. The study analyses teacher utterances, highlighting the frequency and impact of statements, commands, and questions in shaping classroom interactions. In this data, there are five instances of metaphorical coding, there is four metaphorical coding's of commands that are executed in the interrogative mood and one metaphorical coding of statements that are executed in the imperative mood. The results of this study indicate that the teacher's communication style is primarily focused on providing clear and direct instructions. However, it also indicates that teachers could employ metaphorical language in their interaction.

**Keywords:** *Classroom Interaction, Interpersonal Metaphors, Kindergarten Education, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Teacher's Talk*

## INTRODUCTION

Direct discourse involves verbal communications that occur specifically, such as debates, interviews, conversations, or speeches. Compared to written discourse, direct discourse is more contextual, real-time, and spontaneous (Assenova, 2010; Gee, 2014; Mutmainnah & Sutopo, 2016; Yusuf, 2024). This involves the way teachers interact with their students, including the way in which they respond to statements, questions, commands, and offers while speaking. The analysis of direct discourse is beneficial in comprehending the dynamics of the exchange of ideas and the communication patterns that are employed to capture the attention of individuals.

Spoken discourse is interactive and encourages immediate responses in contrast to written discourse. This is evident in the way teachers respond to students' queries or statements in real time during their lectures. Teachers can instantaneously modify or revise their explanations in accordance with students' comprehension because of this rapid speed of response. For instance, if a student is unable to comprehend a concept, the teacher may promptly offer supplementary explanation or employ an alternative illustration to facilitate the student's comprehension. This demonstrates that the function of a teacher's discourse is not limited to the transmission of information; it also serves to adapt to the changing communication requirements of the teaching-learning process.

Furthermore, the context of the circumstance significantly impacts the teacher's talk. The type of communication that occurs is significantly influenced by factors such as the attitude of the students, the atmosphere of the classroom, and the social dynamics within the classroom. For example, if the classroom is in a less conducive environment, such as student restlessness or other distractions, the teacher may need to modify their approach by speaking more calmly or providing clearer and more structured instructions to maintain the flow of communication.

This demonstrates that the oral discourse in a teacher's talk is contextualized, necessitating that the teacher be attentive to the circumstances and prepared to adjust to the requirements of their students.

Since the early 1990s, research has been conducted, particularly by Frances Christie and Michael Halliday, to explore the complexities of mood and modality, thereby elucidating their role as representations within language. They proposed that mood is crucial for the communication of a speaker's attitude or intention, which in turn facilitates the interchange of information and the development of interpersonal relationships between communicators. Building upon Martin's (1992) contributions to grammatical metaphor, their work underscores the critical role of language's interpersonal function in influencing communication dynamics and social interactions. The language system enables speakers to negotiate their social positions and connections through mood, as each sentence form, including imperatives, declaratives, and interrogatives, serves a distinct purpose in promoting interaction and communicating intent.

The following discussion on interpersonal functions concentrates on the way language is employed for interaction, including the establishment of roles and exchange structures in communication. The interpersonal function helps analyze how teachers use language to establish and sustain relationships with students in the context of teacher discourse. This function is crucial in the establishment of an environment that facilitates the development of mutually beneficial interactions in the classroom and supports the effective interaction between teachers and students.

Research has demonstrated that the utilization of deeper vocabulary in teacher talk can significantly enhance children's comprehension of abstract concepts by converting everyday language into more intricate structures. For instance, educators present concepts in a manner that motivate students to engage with language on a more profound level by transforming verbs or adjectives into noun phrases. This method is particularly useful as children transition from concrete thinking to more abstract reasoning during their childhood. Research has demonstrated that the effective utilization of this language by instructors can establish a framework that facilitates the exploration of intricate concepts, thereby enhancing the cognitive development and language skills of children (Martin & Rose, 2003; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Furthermore, this approach facilitates the comprehension of abstract concepts by bridging the distance between the direct experiences of children and more general concepts. For instance, when a teacher transforms actions into concepts, such as "act" into "action," as a method of explaining scientific phenomena, they provide a more comprehensive perspective that enables children to correlate various concepts. This language transition not only facilitates comprehension but also allows students to articulate their own abstract thoughts, thereby improving their critical thinking and

problem-solving skills.

Classroom interaction is a component of the educational process that involves both teachers and students. Classroom interaction is the two-way exchange of information between participants in the learning process. Malamah Tomas (1987: 8) posits that interaction may result in either cooperation or conflict. This is made possible by the collaboration of both instructors and students, which enables the learning process to be facilitated and appropriate and efficient communication to occur. The social and active aspect of the human being that influences others through relationships is illustrated by this, as per Rivers (1987).

According to Rhalmi (2016), the interaction is composed of two morphemes: inter and action. Whether reciprocal or mutual, interactions are employed to illustrate an action that entails discourse and to participate in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Classroom interaction is a critical element of the educational process. Lasac (2011) posits that our perspective and attitudes are formed in the classroom, and students' self-assurance in their learning abilities can be influenced by their involvement in the process. Teachers and students must establish robust relationships for the learning process to be effective.

In this regard, the environment in which significant interactions occur is facilitated by effective classroom interaction. Bruner, J. (1960) emphasizes that learning is an active process where knowledge is built through social interactions rather than being passively received. This perspective suggests that meaningful and effective interactions contribute to more profound and enduring learning, particularly when students feel engaged, respected, and recognized during the learning process. Students internalize knowledge in a more profound and enduring manner when teachers are proficient in facilitating dynamic interactions, such as questioning, discussion, or collaborative activities. These interactions are not merely about the exchange of information; they also involve the establishment of an inclusive learning environment in which students feel valued and understood. Students are more likely to cultivate higher levels of academic confidence, self-esteem, and motivation through consistent and open interactions.

As one of the three core meta functions in his model, this function emphasizes how language is used to express emotions, attitudes, and judgments while establishing roles in interaction. It enables individuals to convey their stance toward others, indicate levels of social closeness or distance, and bring personal subjectivity into interactions, actively influencing social dynamics through their linguistic choices. Mood is a fundamental aspect of a clause that actively contributes to the flow of rhetorical exchanges, emphasizing its central role in communication. It serves as a mechanism through which speakers and writers construct and negotiate meaning in discourse, shaping the interaction between participants. By determining the tone, intention, and structure of a statement whether declarative, interrogative, or imperative mood facilitates the exchange of ideas and emotions, thus playing a critical role in the coherence and effectiveness of discourse.

Teacher talks acts as the primary linguistic input for young learners, especially in environments focused on language acquisition. Research suggests that intentionally incorporating grammatical metaphors into teacher discourse can profoundly impact students' ability to grasp complex linguistic structures (Schleppegrell, 2004). In a

kindergarten setting, where many children are either learning a second language or developing their first language skills, the structure and style of teacher talk are of paramount importance. Effective utilization of grammatical metaphors supports vocabulary acquisition and contributes significantly to children's overall language comprehension and ability to interact with their peers and educators.

Teacher talk extends beyond mere instruction, it is an active pedagogical tool that shapes the learning environment. By guiding conversations and scaffolding learning experiences through metaphorical language, teachers can help children develop a robust understanding of complex relationships and processes. This is particularly beneficial in diverse classrooms, where students may come from varied linguistic backgrounds. By integrating grammatical metaphors into their teaching practices, educators can create a more inclusive and engaging learning experience that meets the needs of all students.

According to Astuti (2020), teaching teenagers presents significant difficulties because of the age group's distinct traits, which include transitions, disorientation, self-consciousness, physical and mental development, and a variety of physical changes. As a result, educators must consider their students' cognitive capacities, attention spans, sensory preferences, and elements that affect their sense of self. Every instructor must the exchange of ideas and emotions, thus playing a critical role in the coherence and effectiveness of discourse. use interactive media that piques students' interest since it is essential to encouraging students' active participation and excitement for learning.

For the teaching and learning process to be successful, effective classroom contact is crucial. Language acquisition may be hampered by a lack of connection between professors and students, especially in English classes. Talk plays a multifaceted role in the classroom that encompasses both the teaching and learning processes. It creates an atmosphere that is favourable for students' participation by giving them a platform to actively engage in academic conversations. In turn, teachers use conversation as a tool to steer and direct the class, guaranteeing its coherence and advancement (Basra & Thoyyibah, 2017).

Talk, however, also controls classroom conduct and student participation (Chavez, 2016; Shamsipour & Allami, 2012). As a result, teachers are essential in helping and guiding students to encourage their active participation in classroom communication and English learning (Teo, 2016; Vongsila & Reinders, 2016). Echoing the requirements of writing as a process of creating meaning, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) emphasizes the active connection between contextually suitable language selections and content development (Schleppegrell, 2004). It offers complex frameworks for clarifying the writing process (Martin & White, 2003; Harman, 2018), providing a convenient resource for educators to successfully instruct writing to the students they teach.

Moreover, research highlights the necessity for educators to be intentional about their linguistic choices, as the effectiveness of grammatical metaphors is significantly influenced by the context in which they are used and the learners' prior knowledge. In classrooms with diverse linguistic backgrounds, the challenge of using metaphors becomes even more pronounced. To facilitate understanding, teachers may need to employ visual aids, gestures, or contextual cues to support students' comprehension, ensuring that all learners can meaningfully engage with the material presented.

Given the critical role of grammatical metaphors in teacher talk, there is an urgent need for specialized teacher training programs that focus on this area. Educators who



grasp the intricacies of grammatical metaphor are better equipped to leverage this knowledge to enhance their teaching practices and provide valuable support for young learners' development (Humphrey, 2013; Rose, 2012). Professional development initiatives aimed at systemic functional linguistics can empower teachers to recognize and effectively apply grammatical metaphors in their instructional approaches.

Teachers should be provided with practical strategies for integrating interpersonal metaphors into their daily classroom interactions as part of this training. This encompasses the ability to construct sentences that effectively communicate intricate concepts and to identify the appropriate moments to modify their language in accordance with the students' comprehension. Additionally, the training should provide interactive activities and real-world classroom examples to enable teachers to practice these skills in a supportive environment.

Education programs can assist teachers in fostering a dynamic linguistic environment, which in turn fosters students' cognitive engagement and language development, by emphasizing the significance of interpersonal metaphors in teacher conversation. This will expand students' vocabulary, improve their critical thinking, and facilitate the connection between abstract concepts and their personal experiences. Furthermore, the utilization of more intricate language aids students in the cultivation of abstract thinking abilities, which are essential for their academic success.

In the end, this type of training not only equips students with the linguistic skills that are indispensable for academic success but also equips them with the capacity to continue learning throughout their lives. To facilitate the development of language and instructional methodologies that can effectively aid young students in learning and interacting, it is imperative to investigate interpersonal metaphors in teacher's talk.

## METHOD OF RESEARCH

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method as outlined by Creswell (2009), who characterizes qualitative research as an interpretive approach, where researchers analysed and make sense of what they observed, heard, and understood. Additionally, Systemic Functional Linguistic Theory, proposed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), is applied to examine the conceptual meaning within this framework. This research facilitates a detailed analysis of the selected data, specifically focused on grammatical metaphors in teachers' talk. The study also examined the types, and most common grammatical metaphors used in kindergarten teacher discourse. This comprehensive analysis allowed insights into how certain aspects of teachers' talk influence Indonesian's conceptual and figurative meanings, the language under study. Through the lens of interpersonal metaphors, the research aimed to identified and interpreted the meanings embedded in kindergarten teachers' speech.

## DATA ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

### Data Analysis

In analyzing the data in this study, researchers conducted several stages, namely:

1. Determining the speech function of each utterance that becomes the object of research;
2. Determine the mood of each utterance that becomes the object of research;
3. Determining the grammatical metaphor of each utterance that becomes

the object of research.

Therefore, the results obtained will show differences based on interpersonal metaphor. The analysis focused on classifying the interpersonal metaphors used in the teacher's interaction as follows with particular attention to their role in shaping the interaction. Interpersonal metaphors, as conceptualized by Halliday (2004), serve as critical tools for articulating attitudes, social roles, and power dynamics within communication. This study categorized these metaphors into distinct types, including modal metaphors, metaphors related to social distance, and those reflecting power relations.

## Speech Function

Speech functions are crucial in the process of meaning exchange as they allow individuals to share ideas, information, and build mutual understanding. Hattie, J. (2009) supports the notion that how speech functions are employed in the classroom can influence the learning experience and foster a positive, interactive educational atmosphere. In classroom conversations, various speech functions such as statements, questions, offers, and commands play a significant role in helping students express their opinions and interact effectively. For instance, statements are used to convey information or arguments, questions to explore, understanding or gathering students' viewpoints, offers to invite or help, and commands to direct or control students' actions. These interactions also enable the teacher to shape students' comprehension in a clearer and more structured manner, while fostering a dynamic classroom environment where every student.

## Statement

**Table 4.1 Sample Statement Realization Day 1**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION
00:07:48,966 --> 00:07:49,766	this is a ball	(S)

According to the data in the table above, the statement made by the teacher, "this is a ball" is classified under the speech function "statement". The teacher shows an object (a ball) to the students. It is usually used to provide information or explain that the object being referred to a ball.

**Table 4.2 Sample Statement Realization Day 2**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION
00:01:16,866 --> 00:01:17,666	B is for a ball	(S)

According to the data in the table above, the statement made by the teacher, "B is for a ball" is classified under the speech function "statement". The teacher shows a simple way to teach the students the alphabet by associating each letter with an object or word that starts with that letter. This is because the content of the

statements is to convey information.

## Question

**Table 4.3 Sample of Question Realization Day 1**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION
00:08:37,266 --> 00:08:38,066	Is there anyone can draw number 8?	(Q)

From the sample of table 4.3 above, the utterance delivered by teacher is a question (Q) used to confirm something with asking, "Is there anyone can draw number 8?". The teacher is asking the student whether the student in the class who can write the letter 8. This conversation shows how the original question is directed at the student.

**Table 4.4 Sample of Question Realization Day 2**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION
00:51:32,000 --> 00:51:52,100	how about we end the class with a song?	(Q)

From the sample of table 4.3 above, the utterance delivered by teacher is a question (Q) used to confirm something with asking, "how about we end the class with a song?". The teacher inquires or suggests that we finish the class with a song. The teacher is suggesting or asking that the class finish with the singing of a song in this context.

## Command

**Table 4.5 Sample of Command Realization Day 1**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION
00:01:21,200 --> 00:01:22,700	Have a seat please!	(C)

Based on the example in table 4.5 above, the command "Have a seat please!" is a teacher's utterance is classified as a Command (C) speech function, as she instructs the students to sit. The teacher employs this command to direct the behaviour of the students in class and to persuade the other students to join with her argument.

**Table 4.6 Sample of Command Realization Day 2**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION
00:15:09,887 --> 00:15:38,732	Give me a blue ball!	(C)

Based on the example in table 4.6 above, the command “Give me a blue ball!” is a teacher's utterance is classified as a Command (C) speech function, as

she instructs the students to give the blue ball to their teacher. The teacher employs this command function of this speech is to give instructions or directions to students so that they perform an action, in this case to take the ball.

## Offer

**Table 4.7 Sample of Offer Realization Day 1**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION
00:51:53,300 --> 00:52:10,700	Let's sing 'If You're Happy' one last time	(O)

Based on the example in table 4.7 above, the utterance “Let's sing 'If You're Happy' one last time” is a teacher's utterance classified as Offer (O) speech function, because the teacher offers students to sing the song titled 'if you're happy' one more time to the teacher. The teacher uses this offer speech function to invite students to perform an action, in this case, singing in class.

**Table 4.8 Sample of Offer Realization Day 1**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION
00:12:41,890 --> 00:12:42,400	let's eat together	(O)

Based on the example in table 4.8 above, the utterance “Let's eat together” is a teacher's utterance that belongs to the Offer (O) speech function, because the teacher offers the students to eat together. The teacher uses this offer speech function to invite her students to eat together so that they can have fun and learn to share in the classroom.



## Metaphorical Coding

### Metaphorical Coding of Command Realized in Interrogative Mood

**Table 4.9 Metaphorical Coding of Command Realized in Interrogative Mood Day 1**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION	MOOD
00:07:09,166 --> 00:07:10,133	Can you look at this one more?	C	(Int)

The speech function illustrated here is the phrase "can you" followed by "look". This conveys a request from the teacher, asking the students to respond to the speaker's question by carrying out the instructed action. The imperative mood is evident in the use of "can," which starts the clause, followed by "you" as the subject. Although this structure functions as a question seeking action, it subtly invites the listener's agreement, rather than issuing a direct command. It aims to assess the student's willingness to fulfil the request, rather than demanding it be done without question. Table 4. 10 Metaphorical Coding of Command Realized in Interrogative Mood Day 1 (2)

**Table 4.10 Metaphorical Coding of Command Realized in Interrogative Mood Day 1 (2)**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION	MOOD
00:06:15,666 --> 00:06:16,600	Can you tell me what colour it is, asta?	C	(Int)

The speech function demonstrated here is the phrase "can you" followed by "tell." This expresses a request from the teacher, asking the students to respond to the speaker's question by performing the required action. The imperative mood is apparent in the use of "can," which initiates the clause, followed by "you" as the subject (Asta). While this structure serves as a question requesting an action, it gently seeks the listener's consent rather than giving a direct command. Its purpose is to evaluate the student's willingness to comply with the request, rather than demanding immediate compliance.

**Table 4.11 Metaphorical Coding of Command Realized in Interrogative Mood Day 2**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION	MOOD

00:45:56,200 --> 00:46:30,600	Could you find something?	C	(Int)
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The speech function demonstrated here is the phrase "could you" followed by "find". This serves as a request from the teacher, asking the students to respond to the question posed by carrying out the specified action. The imperative mood is evident in the word "could," which begins the clause, followed by "you" as the subject. While this construction functions as a question that requests an action, it subtly invites the listener to express their willingness, rather than issuing a direct command. Therefore, the structure seeks to gauge the student's readiness to comply with the request, rather than demanding the action be done without question.

**Table 4.12 Metaphorical Coding of Command Realized in Interrogative Mood Day 2 (2)**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION	MOOD
00:33:17,000 --> 00:34:30,200	can you think of a word that starts with A, Hanan?	C	(Int)

The speech function illustrated here is the phrase "can you" followed by "think". This expresses a request from the teacher, asking the students to answer the speaker's question by performing the required action. The imperative mood is evident in the use of "can," which begins the clause, followed by "you" as the subject (Hanan). While this structure functions as a question requesting an action, it subtly seeks the listener's consent rather than issuing a direct command. Its intent is to assess the student's willingness to fulfill the request, rather than demanding immediate compliance.

### **Metaphorical Coding of Statement Realized in Imperative Mood**

Metaphorical coding of statements in the imperative mood involves the use of metaphor to convey meaning within a directive. This form of communication extends beyond the literal interpretation of words and relies on a shared metaphorical understanding to communicate a more nuanced message. By employing metaphor, the imperative mood enhances communication, allowing for the expression of deeper meanings that may not be immediately apparent through literal language alone.

**Table 4.13 Metaphorical Coding of Statement Realized in Imperative Mood Day 1**

TIME	UTTERANCES	SPEECH FUNCTION	MOOD
00:00:02,966 --> 00:00:06,766	before we start to study and play games, maybe we can remember to pray now.	S	(Imp)

The table above presents utterances containing metaphorical codes within imperative statements, such as "before we start to study and play games." This clause indicates that the students are the ones with both the right and responsibility to act. The imperative is further illustrated in the sentence "maybe we must remember to pray now," which expresses a command.

### Discussion

Based on the analysis of speech function, it was identified: Statement, Question, Command and Offer. These speech functions were realized through different mood types, namely declarative, interrogative, and imperative. This type, incongruent, happens when the speech function does not match its usual mood realization, for example, a statement being expressed in an imperative mood and a command being expressed in an interrogative mood.

The teacher mostly used command in an interrogative mood, which appeared more frequently, showing that the teacher's talk was more attractive. Other patterns, like Statement in an imperative mood, were much less common, respectively. Because of this teacher's talk format, there were more direct challenges like (Statement in declarative mood, Question in an interrogative mood, Command in imperative mood), but in this study aimed that teacher's talk can use few metaphorical sentences to the students in kindergarten.

The analysis of metaphorical coding in the teacher's talk highlights the "Command in an Interrogative mood" pattern, which appears 4 times and "Statement in an Imperative mood" pattern, which appear only 1 time. The analysis underscores the role of metaphors in shaping power dynamics within the classroom. Teachers use metaphors to assert authority, but they also employ them to invite students into a shared responsibility for learning. The deliberate selection of metaphors communicates the teacher's intentions, whether to create a more egalitarian or hierarchical classroom structure, and fosters a sense of belonging, responsibility, and engagement among students.

This study offers a deeper understanding of the role of interpersonal metaphors in the language of teaching and contributes to the broader discourse on language use in early childhood education. The findings emphasize the importance of recognizing metaphorical language as a powerful pedagogical tool. The research

may provide valuable insights for teacher training programs, highlighting the significance of metaphorical choices in enhancing teacher-student relationships, improving communication, and optimizing classroom dynamics. By encouraging reflective practice, this study advocates for a more thoughtful and context-aware approach to communication in educational settings.

## Findings

Based on the analysis, four speech functions were identified: Statement, Question, Offer, and Command. These functions are expressed through various mood types, namely declarative, interrogative, and imperative, which shape the interaction between speakers and reflect the underlying power dynamics. Additionally, different relationships between speech functions and mood realizations were observed. One such relationship is incongruent realization, which occurs when the speech function does not correspond with its typical mood realization. However, in this data, incongruent realizations are minimal. Only two types of metaphorical coding are present: Metaphorical Coding of Command Realized in Interrogative Mood and Metaphorical Coding of Statement Realized in Imperative Mood. For instance, a question may be expressed using a declarative mood rather than an interrogative one. These variations in mood realization contribute to the interactional meaning and the strategic positioning of participants in teacher-student conversations.

Furthermore, the use of different mood types can signal varying levels of authority or involvement in conversation, enabling teachers to subtly influence classroom dynamics. The ability to switch between mood types or employ incongruent realizations allows teachers to control the flow of dialogue, encourage student participation, and direct the course of interaction. This flexibility in mood usage is a vital aspect of teacher-student communication, as it facilitates both control and engagement, creating a dynamic and effective learning environment.

This indicates that the teacher's interactions in the classroom are primarily focused on activities involving direct instructions, which can be easily understood and followed by young children at that age. The dominance of instructions also reflects how the teacher adjusts their communication style to support effective learning development in a classroom that involves physical interaction and limited attention spans. Therefore, the more dominant use of the command mood can be interpreted as the teacher's effort to ensure that students can respond effectively and actively engage in the ongoing learning activities. This approach is also to show on teach the students politeness. Here are the documentations in the learning process at class:

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The research conducted at Panca Budi Kindergarten in Medan aimed to investigate the various types of speech used by the teacher in classroom interactions, with a particular focus on the frequency and usage of different speech forms, such as statements, commands, questions, and indirect speech acts. Additionally, the study placed special attention on the use of interpersonal

metaphors, which serve to clarify or emphasize certain ideas in a way that fosters more engaging communication.

Among the 131 utterances analyzed, the results revealed that commands were the most frequently used form of speech, with 58 occurrences. These were followed by questions, which appeared 38 times, and statements, which were made 35 times. While these forms of direct speech accounted for the majority of the teacher's interactions, the study also identified a noticeable gap in the use of indirect speech forms, such as interpersonal metaphors. These indirect speech acts are typically used to soften or modify direct communication, making it less confrontational and more cooperative in nature.

In fact, interpersonal metaphors were strikingly underrepresented in the data, appearing only 5 times in the form of imperative statements and 4 times in the form of commands structured as questions. This indicated that the teacher rarely used indirect forms of communication, such as softer or more nuanced commands, as well as indirect questions. The absence of these speech forms suggests that the teacher's communication style was more direct and less flexible, potentially limiting the way students interacted with the teacher and participated in the learning process.

The findings highlight an opportunity for the teacher to enhance their communication approach by incorporating more indirect language and interpersonal metaphors into classroom interactions. The use of indirect speech acts, like less direct commands or polite questions, could contribute to a more collaborative and dynamic classroom environment. By softening directives and introducing more varied communication strategies, the teacher could create a space where students feel more empowered to engage in discussions, ask questions, and contribute to the learning process without feeling pressured or restricted.

The study suggests that while the teacher at Panca Budi Kindergarten predominantly relied on direct speech forms such as commands, statements, and questions the limited use of indirect speech acts, including interpersonal metaphors, indicates that the communication style could be improved. A more balanced approach, incorporating both direct and indirect language, would likely foster better student engagement, encourage more active participation, and ultimately enhance the learning experience. This would not only make students feel more at ease in expressing themselves but also help them better understand the material being taught in a more collaborative, supportive manner.

After reviewing and drawing conclusions from the results of this research, several suggestions are presented for consideration:

This study highlights the importance of interpersonal meaning in teacher-student communication at Panca Budi Kindergarten in Medan. It suggests that educators should develop a deeper understanding of how different mood forms such as statements, commands, and questions affect the interactions in the classroom. By being aware of the role each speech function plays, teachers can adapt their language to create a more effective and engaging learning environment. Teachers should reflect on how their use of statements, commands, and questions impacts student participation, social interaction, and engagement, helping to foster a



classroom where students are actively involved and feel valued.

Moreover, it is recommended that teachers improve the clarity of their instructions, keeping in mind the developmental needs of young learners. Since children at the kindergarten level have varying cognitive abilities, instructions should be simple and easy to understand, allowing students to clearly grasp the expectations and actively participate in class activities. Using straightforward language and adjusting the mood of their sentences will help teachers better convey the interpersonal meanings behind their statements, questions, and commands. By varying the mood of their speech, teachers can also make classroom interactions more dynamic, ensuring that students stay engaged and understand the learning objectives more clearly.

For future research, it is recommended that studies further investigate the use of interpersonal metaphors in teacher talk, particularly at Panca Budi Kindergarten. Exploring how metaphors, including indirect language or metaphorical expressions, can be used to enhance student engagement and understanding may offer valuable insights into improving teaching practices. Understanding how metaphorical language shapes teacher-student communication and influences the learning process can provide new strategies for fostering a more interactive and effective classroom environment in early childhood education.

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