

Analysis of Teacher Interviews with Students: A Forensic Linguistic Study

Pontianus Cahyono La'ia

Universitas Warmadewa

pontylaia@gmail.com

Received: DD/MM/YYYY

Revised: DD/MM/YYYY

Published: DD/MM/YYYY

How to cite (in APA style):

La'ia, Pontianus. (2023). Analysis of Teacher Interviews with Students: A Forensic Linguistic Study. *IJFL (International Journal of Forensic Linguistic)*, 4(1),

Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/xxxxxxjr.xx.xxx.Page>

Abstract- The purpose of this study was to analyze the form of the teacher's questions in interviewing students. Most of the previous studies described the phenomenon of student language. But on the contrary, this study describes the phenomenon of teacher language in the form of questions when interviewing students with problems at school using forensic linguistic studies. To reveal the honesty and truth behind the students' language, it is necessary to build a comfortable pattern of interaction between teacher and students. Teacher questions that seem to corner, accuse, threaten, and offend make students feel uncomfortable and result in students being dishonest. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The data collection technique was carried out randomly through a google form questionnaire from several teachers spread across several regions of Indonesia. The data analysis technique was carried out in three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The data analysis is based on the Leech politeness principle. The result of the analysis shows that the teachers's questions mostly use wisdom maxims and politeness scales which are considered impolite, such as the use of direct interrogative sentences research, did not use of greeting words, so the students are considered to be oppressive. It makes the students uncomfortable so they avoid conversations and give incorrect answers

Keywords: analysis, forensic linguistics, interview

I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers are professional educators who have the main task of being educators, teachers, supervisors, directors, trainers, assessors and evaluators of students at all levels of education starting from the elementary, middle and upper levels. In accordance with (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers) that teachers are

professional educators with the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in early childhood education in formal education, primary education and secondary education. The role of teachers as supervisors here covers a broad meaning. Not only as a guide in learning, but also as a guide when students face problems that interfere with the teaching and learning process.

Student cases that occur at school involve teachers who must participate in carrying out their duties as supervisors, namely handling student cases. The academic guidance program is a series of guidance activities that are planned, organized, and coordinated during a certain period and are carried out in an integrated manner. Cooperation between personal guidance, school personnel, family, and the community in an effort to help students face and solve academic problems. This task applies to all teachers according to school regulations. Handling shiwa cases is usually carried out in stages starting from subject teachers, homeroom teachers, counseling guidance teachers and school principals. Teachers often engage in verbal abuse, characterized by raising voices, name-calling, and shaming students, which can lead to negative psychological impacts on students (Yusri et al., 2024).

The first step in handling student cases is through an interactive approach. During the interaction, it is not easy to reveal the truth of the student's speech. Dishonest comments, avoiding conversations by providing convoluted information are things that students often do. To reveal the honesty and truth behind the students' language, it is necessary to build a comfortable pattern of interaction between teachers and students. Teachers must avoid questions that seem to corner, accuse, threaten, offend, and others. If this happens, students feel uncomfortable and afraid to tell the truth. Inappropriate teacher questions can provide opportunities for students to be dishonest. Suppressive speech causes the speaking partner to feel uncomfortable so they choose to avoid the conversation by providing convoluted information. In this process, the role of forensic linguistics is needed. Interviews with students indicate that positive dialogue can enhance learning experiences, yet misunderstandings often arise, suggesting a need for clearer communication frameworks (Fuente et al., 2015).

Forensic linguistics can be defined as the application of linguistics in the field of law, (Gibbons, J., & Turrel, 2008; Olsson, 2004; Turrel, 2008). Forensic Linguistics is a branch of

linguistics that studies and studies linguistics in the legal realm. This branch of linguistics examines more deeply the use of language used by a person involved in a case in the form of oral or written. Through forensic linguistic language analysis, it can uncover cases of fraud, fraud, defamation, incitement, hate speech, hoax, insult, slander, threats, bribery, false testimony, blasphemy and others of a legal nature used in cross-examination, presentation evidence, judges' directions, conclusions to jurors, police warnings, technical interviews, and court and police interrogations. (Turrel, 2008) stated that the main concerns of forensic linguistics, namely (1) the language of legal documents; (2) the language of the law enforcement police; (3) interviews with children or vulnerable witnesses in the legal system; (4) interaction in the courtroom; (5) linguistic evidence and expert testimony in the trial; (6) authorship and plagiarism; and (7) forensic phonetics and speaker identification. teacher interviews through an interactional ethnographic lens, emphasizing the multilayered contexts and sociohistorical significance of discourse, rather than a forensic linguistic study of teacher interviews with students, (Skukauskaitė, 2018).

The author wants to try to research in the world of education. Considering the many student cases that occur in schools involving teachers, they must play a role in solving student cases. In line with one of the main tasks of teachers here is included in the guidance section. The author wants to try to uncover the cause behind the honesty and lies of students when interviewed by teachers. In line with (Solihatin, 2019), Forensic linguists use theoretical tools provided by discourse and pragmatic analysis to analyze the function of language used in specific contexts, such as dictation, conversation, hearing, question and answer, and specific speech action language, for example, threats, promises, warnings, etc."

This study uses a pragmatic approach which is part of macrolinguistics as a method and technique to decipher the data in this study. Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between language and context. In

accordance with this, (Leech, 1993) said that the science that is able to examine the meaning of speech is pragmatic science. Speech that utilizes the principle of conversation in pragmatic theory can produce an interview language pattern that can be used to obtain information. This research refers to Leech's theory and politeness scale. Leech stated that in order to achieve the politeness scale, each speaker must comply with five speech rating scales, namely the cost-benefit scale or loss and benefit scale, optionality scale or choice scale, indirectness scale or indirectness scale, authority scale or authority scale, and social distance scale or social distance scale. (Rahadi, 2005). The five scales are used to parse data on the types of teacher questions. Thus, the title of this study is Teacher Interview Analysis of Students: A Forensic Linguistic Study.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this study is qualitative descriptive. (Nawawi, 1998) The descriptive approach can be interpreted as a problem-solving procedure that is investigated by describing or describing the state of the research subject (person, institution, society, etc.), at the present moment based on the facts that appear and are as they are. In addition, this research is focused on the teacher's questions during the process of interviewing students. The data in this study is the teacher's speech in the form of questions. Data sources come from teachers spread across several regions of Indonesia. The data collection technique is carried out through a google form questionnaire. The data analysis technique is carried out through three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Form and analysis of teacher questions in interviewing students based on Leech politeness.

The following forms of teacher questions were found based on the results of research data collection. (1) Did you smoke in the canteen? The teacher told the student directly that the student had smoked in the school cafeteria. This form of

question is included in the maxim of wisdom at the level of politeness and disrespect, because by using the word question in the most direct mode and attacking the speaking partner. Meanwhile, based on Leech's politeness scale, the speech in question no. (1) is included in the Indirectness Scale, because the question is direct so it can be concluded that this question is considered impolite. (2) How long have you been smoking? The teacher asked the student for information regarding the time when the student had smoked. This form of speech is included in the maxim of wisdom at the level of politeness which is not polite because it does not use greeting words. Based on Leech's politeness scale, these speeches fall under the indirectness scale. It is considered impolite because it uses direct questions. (3) Can you not smoke during school hours and school yards? Teachers ask students not to smoke during learning in the school yard. This question is prohibitive, but by proposing the optional word "can not" with the meaning of asking for approval or making a choice with the intention of not smoking in the school yard. This question is included in the maxim of agreement or agreement, which requires us to reduce disagreement between ourselves and others, or maximize agreement between ourselves and others. Based on Leech's politeness scale, this question is included in the optionality scale. This scale refers to the more or less choices that the speaker conveys to the speaking partner. Thus it can be concluded that this question is considered more polite:

1) I saw you in the cafeteria with your friends. Why lie?

This question means that the teacher conveys information to the student that the teacher has previously seen the student in the canteen with other students. Then the teacher continued the question asking for information in the form of the student's dishonesty. This form of question is included in the maxim of wisdom at the level of politeness and disrespect, because by using the word question, the mode of attacking the speaking partner with the word "Why is Lying" seems to be striking so that Shiva feels threatened. Meanwhile, based on Leech's

politeness scale, this speech is included in the Cost-benefit Scale scale, which is detrimental to the speaking partner so it is considered disrespectful.

2) In your opinion, is it permissible for students to smoke in the school environment or outside the school environment, tp still use the school uniform?

This question sentence means that the teacher asks students for their opinion regarding information on school rules about smoking prohibition in the school environment and still using school uniforms. This means that the teacher does not directly ask with a sentence whether smoking is permissible in the school environment or by directly prohibiting smoking in the school environment. This question is included in the maxim of wisdom, which requires the speaker to minimize or reduce losses for others, or maximize profits for others (Leech, 1993). Meanwhile, based on the politeness scale, this question is included in the Indirectness Scale, which is using indirect questions, so it is considered more polite.

3) Why do you go to the cafeteria to smoke during class hours?

This question sentence has two intentions, namely the teacher asks the student for information regarding the reason why the student left learning and smoked in the canteen. This question is still direct and included in the maxim of wisdom at the level of politeness because it uses question words in the mode of attacking the speaking partner with the words "why don't you go to class and why smoke in the canteen". Based on the politeness scale, this question is included in the Indirectness Scale, because this question is direct so it is considered disrespectful.

4) Don't you feel guilty when you skip school hours?

This question sentence means that the teacher only asks the student for an opinion about the student's actions. There is no meaning of accusations or pressure that burdens the speaking partner in the question. This question is included in the maxim of wisdom, which emphasizes 'reducing the burden for others and maximizing the expression of trust that provides integrity for

others. Based on the politeness scale, this question is included in the Cost-benefit scale, the speaking partner is beneficial, so it is considered more polite.

5) Where did you get the cigarettes from?

This question sentence means that the teacher is only limited to asking for information related to the source of cigarettes found by students. There is no point in accusing or attacking the speaking partner so that the speaking partner will not feel burdened. This question is included in the maxim of wisdom, which emphasizes 'reducing the burden for others and maximizing the expression of trust that provides integrity for others. This question is included in the Cost-benefit politeness scale, which is the category of not harming the speaking partner so it is considered more polite.

6) The glowing Sukron who is smart, why didn't he go to my mother's class?

This question no. 9 contains the word praise, namely glowing and smart. The teacher first gave praise to the student, then continued by asking for information related to the reason why the student could not follow the lesson with the teacher. Teachers do not use direct question sentences, but give praise first. The compliment is considered beneficial for the speaking partner. Thus this sentence fulfills the maxim of praise. The maxim of praise requires every speaker to minimize insults to others, or to maximize praise on others (Leech, 1993). Maksim praise explains the level of politeness based on the good or bad judgment of others. Meanwhile, based on the politeness scale, this question is included in the politeness scale, Indirectness scale, which is indirect. From these two points of view, this form of teacher questioning is considered more polite.

7) Why don't you want to join my lesson, even though I know you're at school, I'm sad, it feels like something is missing if you're not in class. This question means that the teacher asks the student to give a reason why the student does not follow the lesson, then the teacher conveys her sympathy with the words "even though I know you are at school, I am sad, something feels missing if you are not in class". This question is included in the maxim of sympathy, which

requires speakers to maximize sympathy and minimize antipathy to their speech partners (Leech, 1993). Meanwhile, based on Leech's politeness scale, this question is included in the Indirectness Scale, which means indirect. The teacher only asked for information about why the student did not attend the lesson, and continued with other expressions of the teacher's sympathy for the student. So it can be concluded that this form of question belongs to the more polite level Translated with DeepL.com (free version)

4.2. Description of teacher interviews on student cases based on forensic linguistic studies.

Teachers' questions when interviewing students tend to fall into the category of impoliteness, including using direct sentences without greetings, inappropriate choice of questions, questions that attack speaking partners, contain the meaning of accusations, and pressure on students. Based on forensic linguistic studies, the choice of words and sentences that tend to suppress can be categorized as verbal violence. This can cause the speaking partner to feel uncomfortable, so they choose answers that are self-defensive, avoid conversations by providing convoluted information, not in accordance with the teacher's expectations. All of this is done by speech partners to avoid legal action or sanctions imposed at school.

The use of direct sentences in asking questions such as "did you smoke in the canteen? The only possible answer is "yes and no". Direct questions like this are cornering, and pressure the speaking partner. So that the speaking partner feels uncomfortable and is likely to be answered incorrectly by the speaking partner. So the speaking partner can easily answer with the word "no" even though he is actually smoking.

An inappropriate choice of interrogative words usually seems disrespectful. Speech partners feel unappreciated. If a speech is more beneficial to the speaker and it means that it is detrimental to the speaking partner, it is considered impolite. Questions from teachers who do not use greeting words such as "How long have you been smoking?". In this question, the identity of the speaking partner is not clear, there is no name greeting or other more polite

designation. This results in the speaking partner feeling disappreciated.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study show that there are still many forms of teacher questions in interviewing students that violate the maximum and scale of Leech's politeness. Such as the use of direct question sentences, not using greeting words, forms of questions that seem to pressure and corner so that they are considered impolite. This allows students to feel uncomfortable so that students tend to avoid conversations by giving inappropriate and convoluted answers. The maximum that often appears in the teacher's questions is the wisdom maxim, while the politeness scale that is often used in the teacher's questions is the indirect scale.

The results of forensic linguistic analysis in the interview using a pragmatic approach through the use of Leech's theory and politeness scale can be applied to build the right question pattern, as a humanist interview process strategy to reveal the true confession of students without committing acts of violence. Teachers should consider verbal and non-verbal language to produce a comfortable interview language model to obtain information from students without pressure and coercion.

REFERENCES

Gibbons, J., & Turrel, T. (2008). Dimensions of Forensic Linguistics. John Benjamins.

Leech, G. (1993). *Prinsip Prinsip Pragmatik Terjemahan MDD Oka*. Universitas Indonesia.

Nawawi, H. (1998). *Metode Penelitian Bidang Sosial*. Gadjah Mada University Press.

Olsson, J. (2004). *Forensic Linguistics: An Introduction to the Language, crime and the Law*. Continuum.

Rahadi, K. (2005). *Pragmatik: Kesantunan Imperatif Bahasa Indonesia*. Erlangga.

Solihatin, E. (2019). *Linguistik Forensik dan Kejahatan Berbahasa*. Pustaka Pelajar.

Turrel, M. T. (2008). "Malcolm Coulthard and Alisom Johnson 2007: An Introduction to Forensic Linguistics: Language in Evidence". Routledge.

Yusri, R., M., Aryani, F., & Hasmawati. (2025). Verbal Abuse in Schools: Analyzing the Features of Teachers' Verbal Abuse from the Linguistic Perspective. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 40(3–4), 828–849. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605241254135>

Fernández Fuente, S., Cortés Palomino, M. Y., Guerra, S. Y., & Hoyos Almario, E. (2015). Experiencias de diálogo entre maestro y estudiante: encuentros y desencuentros. Experiences of dialogue between the teacher and the student: agreements and disagreements. 19, 39–52. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=5527397>

Skukauskaitė, A. (2018). Interviu pokalbiuose atispindinčių daugiasluoksniių prasmių sisteminė analizė: interakcinės etnografijos požiūris ir jo konceptualūs pagrindai. 39(39), 45–60. <https://doi.org/10.15388/ACTPAED.2017.39.11466>