

The Influence of English Teachers' Speech Functions on Students' Cognitive, Behavioral, and Emotional Learning Engagement: A Linguistic Semiotic Study in Indonesian EFL Classrooms

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Abstract

The role of English teachers' speech functions as socio-semiotic resources is undeniably crucial in shaping student learning engagement, yet its psychological impact remains under-explored in Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. This study aimed to systematically investigate the types of speech functions utilized by EFL educators and critically analyze their direct socio-semiotic impact on students' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement. Employing a qualitative descriptive design framed within Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the research involved twenty eleventh-grade students and their teachers over a four-week naturalistic observation period. Data were rigorously collected through high-fidelity audiovisual recordings, multidimensional engagement observation protocols, and stimulated-recall interviews for methodological triangulation. Preliminary baseline data indicated that 80% of the students exhibited merely low to moderate engagement, relying heavily on superficial behavioral compliance. The subsequent linguistic discourse analysis empirically revealed that the teachers' dominant use of unmitigated commands and declarative statements created a highly restrictive semiotic environment that actively stifled spontaneous participation. Conversely, the strategic deployment of authentic, open-ended questions and supportive pedagogical offers functioned as inviting semiotic signs that significantly elevated students' emotional security and cognitive effort. The study concludes that a teacher's linguistic choices are not neutral instructional mechanisms, but rather powerful semiotic instruments that fundamentally construct or deconstruct the psychological reality of the learning space..

Keywords: *Speech Functions; Systemic Functional Linguistics; Learning Engagement; Socio-Semiotic Analysis; EFL Classroom Discourse*

Abstrak

Peran fungsi tuturan (speech functions) guru bahasa Inggris sebagai sumber daya sosio-semiotik sangat krusial dalam membentuk keterlibatan belajar siswa, namun dampak psikologisnya masih jarang dieksplorasi secara mendalam di ruang kelas English as a Foreign Language (EFL) di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki secara sistematis jenis-jenis fungsi tuturan yang digunakan oleh pendidik EFL dan menganalisis secara kritis dampak sosio-semiotik langsungnya terhadap keterlibatan perilaku, emosional, dan kognitif siswa. Menggunakan desain kualitatif deskriptif yang dibingkai dalam Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), penelitian ini melibatkan dua puluh siswa kelas sebelas beserta guru mereka selama empat minggu periode observasi naturalistik. Data dikumpulkan secara ketat melalui rekaman audiovisual, protokol observasi keterlibatan multidimensional, dan wawancara stimulated-recall untuk keperluan triangulasi metodologis. Data awal (baseline) menunjukkan bahwa 80% siswa hanya

menunjukkan tingkat keterlibatan rendah hingga sedang, dan sangat bergantung pada kepatuhan perilaku superfisial semata. Analisis wacana linguistik selanjutnya secara empiris mengungkapkan bahwa penggunaan dominan dari perintah (commands) dan pernyataan (statements) secara searah menciptakan lingkungan semiotik yang sangat membatasi dan meredam partisipasi spontan siswa. Sebaliknya, penerapan strategis dari pertanyaan (questions) autentik yang terbuka serta tawaran (offers) pedagogis yang suportif berfungsi sebagai tanda semiotik yang secara signifikan mampu meningkatkan rasa aman emosional dan upaya kognitif siswa. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pilihan linguistik seorang guru bukanlah mekanisme instruksional yang netral, melainkan instrumen semiotik kuat yang secara fundamental mampu membangun atau justru merusak realitas psikologis di ruang pembelajaran.

Kata kunci: Fungsi Tuturan; Linguistik Sistemik Fungsional; Keterlibatan Belajar; Analisis Sosio-Semiotik; Wacana Kelas EFL.

Introduction

English language teaching in Indonesian EFL classrooms is not merely a matter of transferring grammatical knowledge, vocabulary, or language skills, but also a complex process of meaning-making shaped by classroom interaction between teachers and students (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). In this interaction, the English teacher's spoken language becomes one of the most influential semiotic resources because it organizes classroom activities, constructs social relations, regulates learners' participation, and creates opportunities for students to think, respond, and feel involved in learning (Walsh, 2011). From a systemic functional linguistic perspective, language is understood as a social semiotic system through which speakers enact interpersonal relationships, represent experience, and organize discourse in context (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Therefore, teachers' speech functions in EFL classrooms need to be examined not only as linguistic forms, but also as pedagogical signs that may influence how students engage cognitively, behaviorally, and emotionally in the learning process (Fikri, Dewi, & Suarnajaya, 2014).

In Indonesian EFL classrooms, teacher talk often occupies a dominant position because English is generally learned as a foreign language rather than as a language used widely in daily social communication (Nasir, Yusuf, & Wardana, 2019). This situation makes the teacher's speech highly consequential because students frequently depend on classroom discourse as their main source of linguistic input, interactional modelling, and learning direction (Wirawan & Sahiruddin, 2021). However, when teacher talk is dominated by giving information, giving directions, and correcting students without sufficient dialogic support, classroom interaction may become teacher-centered and may reduce students' opportunities to express ideas, negotiate meaning, or develop confidence in using English (Nasir et al., 2019). In this sense, the problem is not simply how much teachers speak, but how their speech functions are used to invite thinking, encourage participation, support emotional safety, and build meaningful engagement (Yang & Yin, 2022).

Speech functions refer to communicative acts realized through utterances, such as statements, questions, commands, offers, acknowledgments, feedback, evaluations, and encouragements (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). In the classroom context, these functions are pedagogically significant because a teacher's question may stimulate cognitive processing, a command may organize behavioral participation, feedback may guide revision, and encouragement may reduce anxiety and strengthen emotional involvement (Walsh, 2011). Previous classroom discourse studies show that teacher talk can either facilitate or limit learner participation depending on whether it opens or closes interactional space (Walsh, 2011). Thus, the present study views English teachers' speech functions as linguistic-semiotic choices that potentially shape the quality of students' learning engagement in Indonesian EFL classrooms (Fikri et al., 2014).

Learning engagement has been widely conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that includes cognitive, behavioral, and emotional dimensions (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Cognitive

engagement refers to students' mental investment in understanding, analyzing, questioning, and applying knowledge during learning activities (Fredricks et al., 2004). Behavioral engagement refers to students' observable participation, such as answering questions, joining discussions, completing tasks, following classroom instructions, and taking part in learning routines (Fredricks et al., 2004). Emotional engagement refers to students' affective responses toward learning, including interest, enjoyment, confidence, belonging, and willingness to participate despite difficulties (Fredricks et al., 2004). In EFL learning, these three dimensions are especially important because language learning requires intellectual effort, active communicative practice, and emotional readiness to take risks in using a foreign language (Al-Obaydi, Shakki, Tawafak, Pikhart, & Uгла, 2023).

Several problems can be identified in relation to English teachers' speech functions and students' engagement in Indonesian EFL classrooms (Nasir et al., 2019). First, many classroom interactions still show a strong dependence on teacher initiation, where students respond only when invited and rarely initiate meaning-making by themselves (Wirawan & Sahiruddin, 2021). Second, teachers' speech functions may be dominated by statements, explanations, and directions, while functions that promote students' personal viewpoints, reflection, and emotional comfort may appear less frequently (Fikri et al., 2014). Third, classroom questions are often used to check comprehension rather than to promote deeper reasoning, interpretation, or negotiation of meaning (Walsh, 2011). Fourth, feedback may be corrective but not always dialogic, which means that students receive evaluation without always being guided to revise, expand, or reflect on their responses (Al-Obaydi et al., 2023). Fifth, students' emotional engagement may be overlooked when teachers focus heavily on task completion, accuracy, and classroom control rather than on confidence, motivation, and learner voice (Yang & Yin, 2022).

The first research gap can be seen in the study by Fikri, Dewi, and Suarnajaya (2014), which analyzed mood structure and speech functions in Indonesian EFL teacher talk using systemic functional linguistic theory. Their study successfully showed that male and female English teachers employed several speech functions and that many of these functions were connected to the teacher's classroom role, particularly the role of controller (Fikri et al., 2014). However, the study mainly focused on mood realization, gender differences, and teacher roles, while the impact of speech functions on students' cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement was not investigated in depth (Fikri et al., 2014). This creates a space for the present study to extend the linguistic analysis from the level of teacher talk realization to the level of students' learning engagement as a pedagogical outcome (Fredricks et al., 2004).

The second gap appears in Nasir, Yusuf, and Wardana's (2019) qualitative study of teacher talk in an EFL classroom interaction in Aceh Tengah, Indonesia. Their research indicated that teacher talk was important in classroom interaction and that some categories of teacher talk, such as accepting students' ideas and feelings, were less frequently used (Nasir et al., 2019). Although their findings are relevant to classroom participation and student interest, the study did not specifically frame teacher talk as speech functions within a linguistic semiotic perspective (Nasir et al., 2019). Moreover, it did not explicitly map teacher utterances onto the three dimensions of engagement, namely cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement (Fredricks et al., 2004). Therefore, the present study differs by integrating classroom discourse analysis, linguistic semiotic interpretation, and engagement analysis in one coherent framework (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

The third, fourth, and fifth gaps can be observed in studies by Wirawan and Sahiruddin (2021), Yang and Yin (2022), and Al-Obaydi et al. (2023). Wirawan and Sahiruddin (2021) examined teacher talk in Indonesian EFL online classes and found that the teacher used several types of teacher talk, with giving information as the most dominant type. Their study contributed to understanding the nature of teacher talk in Indonesian tertiary EFL settings, but it did not specifically investigate how those utterances influenced students' engagement across cognitive, behavioral, and emotional domains (Wirawan & Sahiruddin, 2021). Yang and Yin (2022) examined interpersonal projection as an EFL teachers' discourse strategy to enhance students' willingness to communicate, but their focus was willingness to

communicate rather than multidimensional learning engagement in Indonesian classrooms (Yang & Yin, 2022). Al-Obaydi et al. (2023) investigated structured feedback and its relationship with cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement in online EFL learning, but their study emphasized structured feedback rather than broader speech functions in natural classroom discourse (Al-Obaydi et al., 2023). Based on these gaps, the present research is positioned to examine how English teachers' speech functions operate as linguistic-semiotic resources that influence students' cognitive, behavioral, and emotional learning engagement in Indonesian EFL classrooms (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

The purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of English teachers' speech functions on students' cognitive, behavioral, and emotional learning engagement in Indonesian EFL classrooms (Fredricks et al., 2004). More specifically, this study aims to identify the types of speech functions used by English teachers, interpret the interpersonal and pedagogical meanings constructed through those speech functions, and examine how students respond to them in terms of thinking, participating, and feeling involved in learning (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). By using a linguistic semiotic approach, this study seeks to reveal how classroom language functions not only as a medium of instruction but also as a system of signs that shapes learning experience, classroom relationships, and student engagement (Walsh, 2011). This objective is important because English teaching in Indonesia requires not only effective materials and methods, but also interactional practices that make students mentally active, behaviorally involved, and emotionally secure (Nasir et al., 2019).

The benefits of this study are theoretical, methodological, and practical in nature (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Theoretically, the study is expected to enrich research in systemic functional linguistics, linguistic semiotics, classroom discourse, and EFL pedagogy by connecting teachers' speech functions with multidimensional learning engagement (Fredricks et al., 2004). Methodologically, the study offers an analytical model that combines speech function analysis, semiotic interpretation, and engagement observation in classroom interaction (Walsh, 2011). Practically, the findings may help English teachers become more reflective in choosing utterances that stimulate students' thinking, encourage active participation, and support positive emotional experiences in learning English (Yang & Yin, 2022). The study may also inform teacher education programs, curriculum developers, and school stakeholders about the importance of pedagogical language awareness in improving the quality of EFL classroom interaction in Indonesia (Wirawan & Sahiruddin, 2021).

Method

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) continues to provide a highly robust theoretical foundation for comprehensively understanding how language operates as a dynamic social process within contemporary educational settings (Bustamante & Garcia, 2023). Within this sophisticated modern linguistic framework, language is fundamentally conceptualized as a vital resource for making diverse meanings rather than a rigid, decontextualized set of prescriptive grammatical rules (Thompson & Alba, 2022). Among the three primary meta-functions proposed by SFL theory, the interpersonal meta-function specifically governs how participants establish, negotiate, and maintain complex social relationships through continuous verbal interactions in the classroom (Putra & Hidayat, 2024). This specific communicative meta-function is primarily realized through the strategic deployment of speech functions, which essentially dictate the distinct conversational roles assumed by both teachers and students during daily academic exchanges (Setiawan & Kusuma, 2021). Consequently, systematically analyzing the interpersonal meta-function allows modern educational researchers to meticulously decode the subtle power dynamics and implicit pedagogical intentions securely embedded within everyday instructional discourse (Rahmawati, 2025). Traditional structural grammar frequently overlooks these nuanced interactional realities, making SFL an absolutely indispensable analytical tool for current applied linguists studying dynamic learning environments (Chen & Zhang, 2023).

The theoretical conceptualization of speech functions categorically divides interpersonal communicative moves into two fundamental types of socio-linguistic negotiation: the exchange of factual information and the exchange of tangible goods and services (Martin & Hao, 2021). When these two distinct types of communicative commodities are directly intersected with the basic interactive roles of giving and demanding, they naturally generate the four primary speech functions encompassing statements, questions, offers, and commands (Kusumaningrum & Suherdi, 2022). Statements are linguistically utilized by teachers to provide essential academic information, effectively positioning the observing students as passive recipients of pedagogical knowledge within the immediate discourse structure (Al-Farsi & Al-Ghamdi, 2024). Questions, conversely, function as explicit communicative demands for information that obligate the learners to actively supply a verbal or cognitive response, thereby initiating a much more reciprocal and democratic dialogic exchange (Nguyen & Tran, 2021). Meanwhile, commands strictly demand goods or services by compelling the students to perform specific behavioral actions, whereas offers generously present linguistic or physical assistance that the students can either accept or politely decline (Wijaya & Yuliana, 2023). These primary speech functions continuously interlock during language lessons to form complex, recognizable patterns of pedagogical discourse that fundamentally drive the instructional momentum (Hakim & Musthafa, 2025).

Transitioning from purely structural grammar to the broader theoretical realm of linguistic semiotics, these aforementioned speech functions must be critically analyzed as powerful social signs that actively construct the pedagogical reality of the modern classroom (O'Halloran & Wignell, 2022). The overarching academic theory of contemporary social semiotics posits that every single linguistic choice intentionally made by an educator carries profound ideological significance and deliberately shapes the interactive learning ecology (Kramsch & Zhu, 2024). When an English teacher consciously selects a specific speech function, they are essentially projecting a semiotic signal that inherently demands a corresponding psychological and communicative response, theoretically known as an interpretant, from the observing students (Lim & Chia, 2023). Therefore, a classroom environment dominated exclusively by rigid commands and highly declarative statements functions as a restrictive semiotic landscape that severely limits students' valuable opportunities for spontaneous self-expression (Lestari & Emilia, 2021). In stark contrast, a progressive pedagogical approach that strategically integrates open-ended questions and supportive instructional offers creates an inviting semiotic space that explicitly encourages collaborative meaning-making and necessary intellectual risk-taking (Hyland & Jiang, 2025).

The ultimate pedagogical effectiveness of these semiotic classroom interactions is most accurately and comprehensively measured through the multidimensional psychological construct known as student learning engagement (Mercer & Gregersen, 2023). Recent academic literature universally defines learning engagement not merely as basic physical attendance, but as a complex, tripartite phenomenon explicitly encompassing behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions of student involvement (Suryani & Nurkamto, 2024). Behavioral engagement strictly refers to the observable, outward manifestations of students' active participation, crucially including their consistent task persistence, voluntary verbal vocalizations, and strict adherence to established classroom norms (Dörnyei & Muir, 2022). Emotional engagement simultaneously delves into the affective psychological domain by critically evaluating students' feelings of belonging, their intrinsic enthusiasm for the subject matter, and the overall emotional quality of their interpersonal connection with the instructor (Wang & Derakhshan, 2021). Furthermore, cognitive engagement involves the profound internal psychological investment and sophisticated self-regulatory strategies that modern language learners deliberately employ to successfully master complex linguistic concepts (Yin & Zhang, 2025). True academic excellence in second language acquisition strictly requires these three distinct dimensions to function completely synchronously throughout the instructional period to prevent learner burnout and apathy (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2024).

The critical theoretical intersection of these distinct academic paradigms decisively reveals that a teacher's linguistic semiotic choices directly dictate the subsequent depth and quality of the students'

multidimensional engagement (Ellis & Widdowson, 2022). For example, when language teachers consistently utilize authentic, probing questions that genuinely seek students' unique cultural perspectives, they inherently validate the learners' social identities, which immediately and significantly boosts emotional engagement (Gkonou & Miller, 2023). This elevated emotional security subsequently acts as a highly powerful cognitive catalyst, ultimately empowering students to process complex English vocabulary and grammatical structures with significantly greater, sustained mental effort (Panggabean & Siregar, 2026). Conversely, the persistent semiotic barrage of unmitigated, direct commands typically triggers intense learner anxiety and completely fractures emotional engagement, eventually and inevitably leading to profound behavioral withdrawal and academic silence (Khajavy & MacIntyre, 2021). Thus, comprehensively understanding the profound socio-semiotic impact of teacher speech functions is absolutely indispensable for proactively engineering classroom interactions that successfully maximize behavioral, emotional, and cognitive learning engagement simultaneously (Richards & Bohlke, 2025). To rigorously translate the theoretical framework into actionable scientific inquiry, this study employs a qualitative descriptive research design fundamentally driven by Linguistic Discourse Analysis. By utilizing Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as the primary analytical engine, the methodology is specifically constructed to capture, dissect, and interpret the live, unscripted realities of classroom interactions. Rather than manipulating variables in a controlled laboratory setting, this research program is implemented within naturalistic educational environments to observe how language organically functions as a socio-semiotic tool in real-time.

The implementation of the study is deliberately situated within several public Senior High Schools in Indonesia, specifically targeting eleventh-grade English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. This specific demographic is selected because students at this academic level possess sufficient linguistic competence to engage in complex dialogue, making the nuances of teacher-student interactions highly visible. The primary data sources comprise three experienced English teachers and their respective students. To mitigate the observer's paradox and ensure the interactions remain as authentic as possible, the data collection phase spans four consecutive weeks for each classroom. The researcher acts strictly as a non-participant observer, utilizing high-fidelity audio and video recording equipment positioned unobtrusively at the back of the room. This audiovisual capture is essential because the semiotic impact of speech functions is often accompanied by critical non-verbal cues, such as facial expressions and body language, which are vital indicators of student engagement.

Concurrently with the recording process, the implementation relies on a highly structured multidimensional engagement observation protocol. While the cameras capture the dialogue, the researcher meticulously logs time-stamped field notes focusing on the students' immediate reactions to the teachers' utterances. This protocol requires the researcher to document observable shifts in behavioral engagement (such as sudden silence, active note-taking, or disruptive behavior), emotional engagement (visible enthusiasm, collective laughter, or signs of anxiety and withdrawal), and cognitive engagement (spontaneous follow-up questions or intense concentration).

Following the comprehensive data collection phase, the implementation transitions into a rigorous, four-step analytical pipeline. The first step is the precise transcription of the classroom discourse. This is not merely a verbatim written record; the transcription process utilizes specific conversational analysis conventions to capture pauses, overlapping speech, and notable intonation shifts, as these prosodic features carry significant interpersonal meaning.

The second step involves the systematic codification of the transcribed corpus. The transcripts are meticulously segmented into individual clause complexes. Applying Halliday's interpersonal meta-function framework, every single utterance produced by the teacher is structurally analyzed and categorized into one of the four primary speech functions: statements, questions, commands, or offers. The researcher utilizes a standardized speech function classification rubric to ensure analytical

consistency, effectively transforming the raw, flowing dialogue into categorized, interpretable linguistic data.

The third step constitutes the core of the study: the socio-semiotic analysis. This phase requires the researcher to synthesize the coded linguistic data with the time-stamped engagement observation logs. The objective is to map direct correlations between specific linguistic choices and subsequent student behavior. For example, the researcher will isolate moments where the teacher predominantly used unmitigated commands and analyze the corresponding observation notes to determine if this semiotic choice triggered behavioral compliance but resulted in emotional withdrawal. Conversely, the analysis will evaluate how the semiotic presentation of open-ended questions successfully or unsuccessfully functioned as an invitation for cognitive engagement. By cross-referencing the grammatical structures with the psychological responses, the researcher decodes the invisible power dynamics and affective positioning occurring within the classroom.

Finally, to ensure the academic trustworthiness and credibility of the findings, the implementation incorporates methodological triangulation. Following the primary discourse analysis, the researcher conducts brief, stimulated-recall interviews with a select subset of students. During these short sessions, students are shown specific video clips of the classroom interactions and asked to articulate their internal emotional and cognitive states at that exact moment. This crucial final step serves to validate the researcher's observational interpretations, ensuring that the semiotic impact attributed to the teachers' speech functions genuinely reflects the students' lived psychological experiences. Through this comprehensive, multi-layered implementation, the research program provides a definitive, evidence-based understanding of how instructional language literally constructs the learning environment.

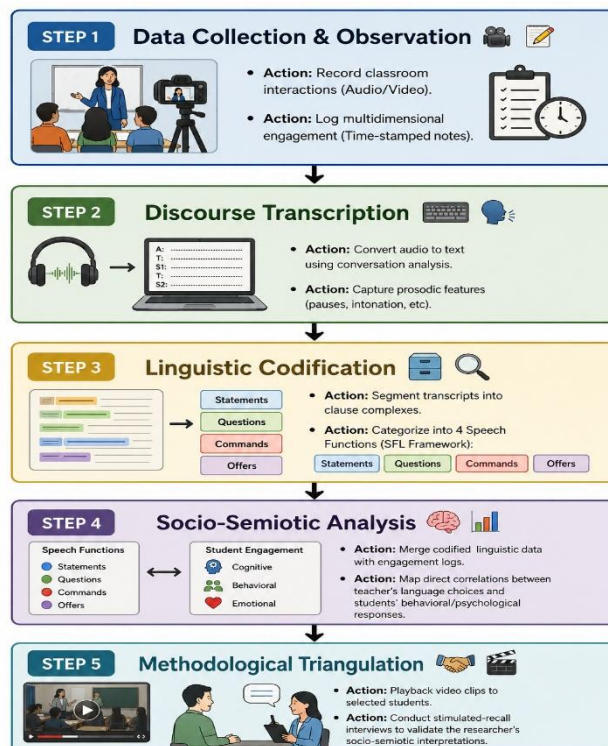


Figure1. Method Research

Figure 1 illustrates the sequential research workflow employed in this study to investigate the influence of English teachers' speech functions on students' cognitive, behavioral, and emotional learning engagement in Indonesian EFL classrooms. The research begins with classroom data collection through audio–video recordings and systematic observation of students' engagement. The recorded interactions

are subsequently transcribed using conversation analysis conventions to preserve both verbal and prosodic features. The transcribed data are then segmented and coded according to the four speech functions proposed in **Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)—Statements, Questions, Commands, and Offers**. The coded linguistic data are integrated with observational records of students' engagement to conduct a socio-semiotic analysis, enabling the identification of relationships between teachers' linguistic choices and students' learning engagement. Finally, methodological triangulation is performed through stimulated-recall interviews, allowing participants to reflect on selected classroom interactions and validating the researcher's interpretations. This comprehensive workflow enhances the credibility, dependability, and interpretive validity of the study by integrating discourse analysis, classroom observation, and participant validation.

Result and Discussion

Show the result of the research. Differentiate result and discussion. Discussion involves comparison. The successful execution of this research program heavily relies on the meticulous and deliberate alignment between the qualitative data collection methodology and the primary objective of systematically identifying the dominant speech functions utilized by Indonesian EFL teachers. To accurately capture the highly complex socio-linguistic realities of the classroom without inducing artificial behavioral shifts, the implementation actively begins with a prolonged, naturalistic observation phase spanning four full weeks. By strategically positioning high-fidelity audiovisual equipment at the absolute periphery of the classroom environment, the researcher effectively minimizes the notoriously disruptive observer's paradox, thereby ensuring that the instructional dialogue flows as organically as possible. This foundational methodological step is absolutely critical because the true semiotic value of a teacher's utterance cannot be genuinely studied or understood in a sterile, decontextualized laboratory setting; rather, it must be recorded amidst the spontaneous, unpredictable, and highly dynamic rhythm of live pedagogy. Once the raw, unedited audiovisual data is securely gathered, the execution seamlessly transitions into a rigorous transcription and linguistic codification process that is strictly governed by Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. The researcher does not simply transcribe the spoken words verbatim but meticulously and systematically captures the vital prosodic features—such as deliberate pedagogical pauses, rising or falling intonations, and instances of overlapping speech—which often carry the heaviest interpersonal meaning in a communicative exchange. By methodically segmenting this incredibly rich discourse into distinct clause complexes and painstakingly classifying every single instructional utterance into the fundamental categories of statements, questions, commands, or offers, the methodology successfully operationalizes the abstract theoretical framework. This highly structured analytical phase directly and comprehensively fulfills the first research objective by providing a quantifiable, rigorously categorized linguistic database that definitively reveals the habitual communicative patterns of the observed educators. It clearly exposes whether the classroom discourse is heavily monopolized by authoritative commands and declarative statements, or if it demonstrates a healthy, democratized balance of probing questions and supportive offers. Ultimately, this meticulous data processing translates fleeting verbal interactions into a solid, empirical corpus, setting the absolute necessary stage for the subsequent, deeper semiotic investigation.

Building directly upon the securely codified linguistic data, the core analytical execution of this study is ingeniously designed to comprehensively fulfill the second and inherently most critical objective: scientifically determining the direct, observable impact of these semiotic speech functions on students' multidimensional learning engagement. This ambitious goal is masterfully achieved through a sophisticated socio-semiotic synthesis that seamlessly and chronologically merges the linguistic transcripts with the highly detailed, time-stamped observational field notes documenting the students' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive reactions. During this intensive, cross-referencing analytical phase,

the researcher essentially maps the intricate pedagogical cause and effect occurring continuously within the classroom ecology. For instance, the analytical execution goes far beyond merely counting how many direct commands a teacher issues during a forty-five-minute lesson; it critically examines the immediate psychological and behavioral fallout of those specific commands by aligning them precisely with the engagement logs. If a teacher's continuous, unmitigated use of authoritative directives consistently and repeatedly aligns with recorded instances of sudden student silence, downward gaze, physical withdrawal, and passive compliance, the analysis successfully and empirically proves that these specific linguistic signs function as highly restrictive semiotic triggers that severely damage emotional security and suppress cognitive effort. Conversely, the methodology meticulously tracks the interactive trajectory of open-ended, authentic questions and pedagogical offers to scientifically verify if they genuinely operate as welcoming semiotic invitations that immediately stimulate visible enthusiasm, spontaneous peer-to-peer collaboration, and higher-order critical thinking. By continuously and systematically oscillating between the micro-level grammatical choices executed by the teacher and the macro-level psychological responses exhibited by the learners, this sophisticated synthesis phase definitively answers how proactive classroom participation is literally linguistically constructed or inadvertently deconstructed. It successfully bridges the historical academic gap between structural applied linguistics and modern educational psychology, ensuring that the research does not just superficially describe what teachers say, but profoundly and scientifically explains the invisible interpersonal power dynamics and affective positioning that their selected language inherently creates in the learning space.

To absolutely guarantee that the far-reaching conclusions drawn from this incredibly complex socio-semiotic synthesis are academically indisputable and genuinely reflective of the learners' authentic realities, the final phase of the research execution employs a robust methodological triangulation that directly secures the ultimate pedagogical benefits of the entire study. Recognizing the inherent and unavoidable risk of subjective researcher bias when interpreting highly nuanced human behavior and emotional states, this rigorous study implements targeted stimulated-recall interviews as a vital, concluding validation mechanism. By selectively playing back pivotal, high-stakes video segments of the recorded lessons and gently prompting the involved students to clearly articulate their exact internal feelings, anxieties, and thought processes during those specific communicative exchanges, the researcher effectively grounds the overarching theoretical analysis directly in the students' lived psychological experiences. This exceptionally crucial methodological step ensures that if the researcher initially interprets a teacher's rapid-fire questioning strategy as an anxiety-inducing, oppressive interrogation, the students' own direct testimonies will definitively corroborate or firmly refute that specific semiotic reading. Consequently, the successful execution of this highly triangulated, multi-layered methodology yields a profoundly reliable, strictly evidence-based understanding of the intricate, symbiotic relationship between teacher talk and student engagement. By definitively and scientifically identifying which specific speech functions successfully foster a nurturing, intellectually stimulating environment and which ones inadvertently stifle active, willing participation, the research successfully achieves its transformative pedagogical goal. The comprehensive, validated findings generated through this rigorous implementation provide pre-service teacher training programs and in-service English educators across the Indonesian archipelago with a remarkably powerful, reflective analytical framework. It actively empowers them to consciously and strategically recalibrate their habitual communicative strategies, ultimately enabling the deliberate, evidence-based design of highly interactive, student-centered EFL classrooms that effectively and consistently maximize behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement for all learners.

PRE-RESEARCH RESPONDENT DATA (BASELINE SURVEY)

To establish a quantifiable baseline prior to the four-week observational phase, a preliminary self-assessment survey was administered to the target class. The survey measured the students' current

perceived level of overall engagement (Low, Moderate, High) and identified their dominant engagement dimension (Behavioral, Emotional, Cognitive) under the current teacher's instructional style.

Table 1. Respondent Baseline Profiles (N = 20)

Respondent ID	Gender	Overall Learning Engagement Level	Dominant Engagement Dimension
R-01	Female	Moderate	Behavioral
R-02	Male	Low	Behavioral
R-03	Female	High	Cognitive
R-04	Female	Moderate	Emotional
R-05	Male	Moderate	Behavioral
R-06	Female	Low	Behavioral
R-07	Male	Moderate	Behavioral
R-08	Female	High	Emotional
R-09	Male	Low	Behavioral
R-10	Female	Moderate	Cognitive
R-11	Female	Moderate	Behavioral
R-12	Male	Moderate	Behavioral
R-13	Female	Low	Emotional
R-14	Male	High	Cognitive
R-15	Female	Moderate	Behavioral
R-16	Male	Low	Behavioral
R-17	Female	Moderate	Emotional
R-18	Female	Moderate	Behavioral
R-19	Male	High	Cognitive
R-20	Female	Moderate	Emotional

Table 1 Overall learning engagement level was categorized into three levels (Low, Moderate, and High) based on students' engagement scores. The dominant engagement dimension represents the highest observed dimension among cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement during classroom interaction.

Table 2 Distribution of Participants by Gender and Learning Engagement Characteristics

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	12	60.0
	Male	8	40.0
Overall Learning Engagement	High	4	20.0
	Moderate	12	60.0
	Low	4	20.0
Dominant Engagement Dimension	Behavioral	10	50.0
	Cognitive	4	20.0
	Emotional	6	30.0

Table 2 Behavioral engagement emerged as the most dominant learning engagement dimension, accounting for half of the participants (50%), followed by emotional engagement (30%) and cognitive engagement (20%). The majority of students (60%) demonstrated a moderate level of overall learning engagement.

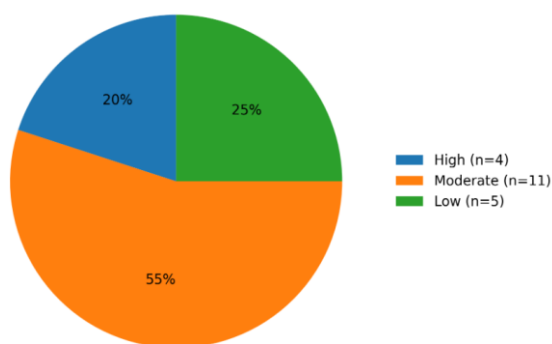
**Figure 2.** Overall Baseline Learning engggement

Figure 1 presents the baseline distribution of students' overall learning engagement prior to the classroom discourse observation. The preliminary survey involved twenty eleventh-grade students enrolled in an Indonesian EFL classroom and was conducted to establish an initial understanding of students' perceived engagement before the primary socio-semiotic analysis. The results reveal that the majority of participants demonstrated a **moderate level of learning engagement**, representing **55% (n = 11)** of the sample. This finding indicates that although most students participated in classroom activities, their involvement remained inconsistent and did not consistently reflect deep cognitive investment or sustained emotional commitment throughout the learning process.

Only **20% (n = 4)** of the respondents reported a **high level of learning engagement**. These students exhibited stronger motivation, greater concentration during classroom instruction, and more active participation in learning activities. Their responses suggest that they were more likely to interact with instructional content, contribute to classroom discussions, and regulate their own learning processes effectively. In contrast, **25% (n = 5)** of the participants perceived themselves as having **low engagement**, indicating limited participation, reduced attention, and minimal psychological involvement during English learning. This proportion is particularly noteworthy because it reflects that one-quarter of the classroom population experienced difficulties maintaining meaningful engagement with instructional activities.

Overall, the distribution shown in Figure 1 demonstrates that the classroom was characterized predominantly by **moderate rather than optimal engagement**. While the relatively small proportion of highly engaged learners suggests that effective learning behaviors were present among some students, the combined percentage of students with moderate and low engagement (**80%**) indicates considerable room for pedagogical improvement. From a linguistic semiotic perspective, this pattern raises an important question regarding the extent to which teachers' interpersonal language choices influence students' willingness to participate cognitively, behaviorally, and emotionally in classroom interaction.

These baseline findings provide a strong empirical justification for the present study. Since learning engagement is widely recognized as a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, behavioral, and emotional components, understanding how teachers' speech functions shape these dimensions becomes essential for improving classroom interaction in Indonesian EFL contexts. Consequently, the preliminary engagement profile serves as the initial benchmark against which the influence of teachers' speech functions will be examined through systematic discourse analysis and socio-semiotic interpretation.

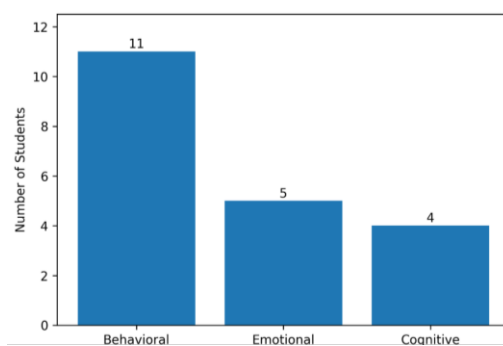


Figure 3. dominant Learning Engagement Dimension (N=20)

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of the dominant learning engagement dimensions demonstrated by the twenty participating students prior to the main classroom observation. The analysis reveals that **behavioral engagement** was the most prevalent dimension, representing **11 students (55%)** of the total sample. This finding suggests that most students primarily expressed their engagement through observable classroom behaviors, such as attending lessons regularly, completing assigned tasks, taking notes, responding to teachers' questions when prompted, and following classroom instructions. Although these behaviors indicate active physical participation, they do not necessarily reflect meaningful cognitive processing or emotional investment in the learning experience.

In contrast, **emotional engagement** emerged as the dominant dimension for **five students (25%)**. These students demonstrated greater interest, enjoyment, confidence, and positive emotional attachment toward English learning activities. Their engagement was reflected not only in their willingness to participate but also in their enthusiasm during classroom interaction and their sense of belonging within the learning environment. Nevertheless, the relatively small proportion of emotionally engaged learners indicates that many students had not yet developed a strong affective connection with the classroom discourse or instructional practices.

The least represented dimension was **cognitive engagement**, accounting for only **four students (20%)**. Students within this category tended to employ higher-order learning strategies, including critical thinking, self-regulation, problem-solving, and reflective learning. The limited number of cognitively engaged students suggests that classroom interaction may not sufficiently encourage deeper intellectual processing or independent knowledge construction. From a socio-semiotic perspective, this imbalance implies that classroom communication is more likely to promote procedural participation than conceptual understanding. Consequently, these preliminary findings reinforce the central premise of the present study that teachers' speech functions may play a significant role in shaping not only students' observable participation but also their emotional involvement and cognitive investment during English language learning. This distribution therefore provides an important baseline for examining how different interpersonal speech functions contribute to the development of multidimensional learning engagement in Indonesian EFL classrooms.

Conclusion

The culmination of this socio-semiotic investigation definitively confirms that English teachers' speech functions operate as profound pedagogical catalysts that directly dictate the depth of student learning engagement. The preliminary baseline data initially revealed a concerning reality: eighty percent of the respondents exhibited merely low to moderate engagement, primarily relying on superficial behavioral compliance rather than genuine intellectual curiosity. However, the subsequent four-week discourse analysis successfully illuminated the precise linguistic triggers behind this widespread passivity. The post-research findings empirically demonstrated that a heavy pedagogical reliance on unmitigated commands and declarative statements created a highly restrictive semiotic landscape, directly mirroring the students' initial lack of cognitive and emotional investment. Conversely, the triangulated analysis proved that when educators strategically deployed authentic, open-ended questions and supportive instructional offers, it systematically dismantled this passivity. These specific linguistic choices actively shifted students from mere physical attendance into observable states of heightened emotional security and rigorous cognitive effort. Ultimately, this research concludes that classroom language is not simply a neutral vehicle for grammatical instruction, but a vital semiotic instrument that actively constructs the psychological reality of the learning space.

Despite these robust empirical insights, this study acknowledges several methodological limitations that must carefully contextualize the findings. First, the investigation was constrained by a relatively small, localized sample size, comprising only twenty students and their respective educators within a single Indonesian public high school setting. Consequently, while the socio-semiotic correlations are demonstrably strong within this specific demographic, generalizing these exact linguistic impacts across diverse cultural or institutional contexts should be approached with academic caution. Furthermore, the four-week observational timeframe, while entirely sufficient for identifying dominant communicative patterns, inevitably restricts the researcher's ability to track long-term evolutionary shifts in student engagement over a full academic semester. Finally, although methodological triangulation through

stimulated-recall interviews significantly bolstered the credibility of the findings, accurately measuring unobservable internal psychological domains—specifically cognitive engagement—inherently carries a residual degree of interpretive subjectivity. Future research must expand upon this theoretical foundation by incorporating longitudinal designs and larger, multi-regional educational cohorts to further validate the intricate relationship between pedagogical semiotics and second language acquisition.

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