



## An Analysis of Written and Spoken Discourse in English Assignment and Classroom Discussion

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis wacana para peserta didik pada pelajaran bahasa Inggris tentang materi memberi selamat kepada orang lain baik secara tertulis maupun lisan. Dalam percakapan sehari-hari, siswa melakukan percakapan informal. Namun ketika berdiskusi, mereka terkadang menggunakan bentuk bahasa formal bahkan ketika berbicara dengan sesama peserta didik. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui jenis-jenis bentuk bahasa formal yang digunakan para peserta didik saat berdiskusi dan tujuan penggunaannya. Partisipan penelitian ini adalah para peserta didik kelas VIII yang dibagi menjadi empat kelompok. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, dan data dianalisis dengan IRF. Dari analisis yang dilakukan, peserta didik menggunakan bentuk bahasa formal dalam empat jenis: leksis netral, bentuk lengkap, ungkapan kesantunan, dan manajemen giliran berbicara. Peneliti mengamati diskusi antar peserta didik dan cara mereka berinteraksi satu sama lain, serta apakah ada masalah sosial di kelas. Persepsi lain dari peneliti adalah peserta didik perlu dimotivasi untuk lebih banyak berbicara bahasa Inggris selama jam bahasa Inggris, bahkan ketika mereka sedang berdiskusi dengan teman-temannya atau ketika mereka bertanya kepada guru.

**Kata Kunci:** Analisis wacana, Bentuk bahasa formal, Diskusi peserta didik

### Abstract

*This study analyzed the students' written and spoken discourse in English class about the material of congratulating people. In daily conversation, students have informal conversations. However, when it turns to discussion, they sometimes use formal forms of language even when talking to other students. Therefore, this study aims to find the types of formal language forms used by students during the discussion and the purposes of the use. The participants of this study are the eighth-grade students divided into four groups. A qualitative descriptive approach is applied in this study, and the data are analyzed with IRF. From the analysis, the students used formal forms of language in four types: neutral lexis, complete form, politeness, and turn-taking. This study observes the discussion between the students and how the students interact with each other, as well as whether there is some social problem within the class. Another perception from the researchers is that students need to be motivated to speak English more during English class, even if they are discussing with their friends or when they ask questions to the teacher.*

**Keywords:** Discourse analysis, Formal language forms, Students' discussion

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DOI : <https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v6i4.6326>

ISSN 2656-8063 (Media Cetak)

ISSN 2656-8071 (Media Online)

## INTRODUCTION

Efficient learning is correlated with effective communication between the teacher and the students during the teaching and learning process. The success of the teaching and learning process depends on the teacher-student interaction, and everyone agrees that the teacher bears the primary responsibility for the process' efficacy (Khartha et al., 2022). Successful classroom communication is critical to the overall learning process, but it is essential when learning a language. Besides, teacher's interpersonal communication also supports students in doing projects even in other classes besides language classes (Asrar et al., 2018). From these samples, it could be included that communication in the classroom plays important roles in determining students' level of success and enthusiasm. Classroom language or instruction is the term that can be used to describe the variety of language that teachers typically use in the teaching and learning process (Xiao-Yan, 2006). Language in classroom context includes saying hello or greetings to students, delivering materials, asking questions, and managing the classroom. Thus, the language used determines whether a language class succeeds or fails.

To build a communicative class, a teacher not only focuses on the ideas and opinions of the teacher but also on how the English teacher will communicate those ideas and whether they are appropriate for both specific and general settings. Therefore, English teachers need help providing materials in the appropriate language for class discussions. Some of them need to learn how to describe and explain instructional materials using the correct type of speech, or they utilize English to offer directions. They teach in the classroom and explain the materials in the same way day by day, and sometimes, it does not encourage the students to speak English actively. As a result, because the teacher does not vary how they present the subject in the classroom, students may get bored. This issue makes achieving the learning process objectives even more challenging. It is mentioned that teachers need to promote conversation and communication in the classroom so that knowledge construction among the students can be acquired (Brooks & Brooks, 1993).

The interaction between the teacher and the students in an EFL classroom is a social phenomenon that occurs in both limited formal and informal language use. Formal language can help prevent misunderstandings between the communicators and communicants. It is in line with the statement of Heylighen & Dewaele (1999), who listed the following as some of the reasons why individuals would favor formal phrases over contextual ones, or vice versa, including students and teachers in the classroom. Purwati (2020) discovered that students actually enjoy it when the teacher speaks informally. Students feel more at ease and connected to teachers when they employ casual language use. Students benefit from the use of informal language as well, particularly when it comes to avoiding dull situations in the classroom. Informal language, which the students usually use when talking and discussing with other students, can build their social approach as well.

Nowadays, in building autonomous and constructivist teaching, which encourages the students to build up their knowledge as an essential process, of course, discussion between the students is needed. Kieu Oanh and Hong Nhung (2022) said that constructivist teaching needs to promote students' conversation, communication, and discussion. Teachers there can guide the students so that the discussion will still go on the right track. Brooks and Brooks (1993) said that constructivist teaching needs a strategy to promote. Still, it has several principles, one of which is the promotion of discussion in which students construct their knowledge. However, in the discussion in the classroom context, sometimes the students prefer to avoid the conversation as the teacher supervises them. They usually use informal language when talking to their friends. However, in the context of classroom discussion, students tend to use formal language, even when talking to classmates.

When teaching and learning take place in a formal classroom setting, language use should be appropriate for the context. Students must, therefore, communicate formally when interacting with one

another in the classroom since the language choice must take the context into account. It is customary to utilize formal language when in a formal setting. According to Irvine (1979), formal language comprises specific code elements and a detailed description of its unique list of rules, which differ it from informal language. In contrast to formal language, informal language is typically characterized by a lack of restrictions and carelessness while selecting terminology for communication.

Heylighen and Dewaele (1999) stated that there are a few reasons why people choose to employ formal terms over contextual ones or the other way around. Formal language reduces the likelihood of misinterpretation by the communicators who are in a different context than the communicators. The drawback of formal speech is that it tends to be more stiff or static and needs to be more flexible when it comes to adjusting to situations that call for terms that have meanings other than those found in dictionaries. Additionally, the formal discourse has a more intricate structure. As a result, creating and comprehending formal phrases takes more significant effort, focus, and cognitive processing. In the classroom context, the use of formal language is usually chosen to avoid "impolite expression", and as a symbol of respect in the forum, they are on with good behaviour and carefulness, including speech acts.

The research on formality and informality of language use is included in discourse analysis. Fraser (2021) reported that the Latin word *discursus*, which means "conversation" or "speech," is where the word "discourse" originates. Social conventions, cultural values, historical influences, power dynamics, and particular communication objectives are some of the factors that shape discourses. They can be written or spoken, formal or informal, and they are vital in influencing our perceptions of and comprehension of the world around us in relation to the meaning behind language use (Zhang & Zhang, 2022).

Though communicating between students, or peer communication, does not seem to gain learning insight compared to communicating to experts or native speakers due to error possibility, communicating between students provide more opportunity for them to speak as a form of practical communication rather than theoretical (Sato, 2015). Thus, creating communicative classroom can build unique learning environment between students as they communicate and discuss the topics and use the language (Sato, 2015; Philp et al., 2013). Communicative teaching and learning activities involving active interaction and students' discussion are encouraged by the Indonesian ministry of education too (Salinan Permendikbud Nomor 23 Tahun 2016 Tentang Standar Penilaian Pendidikan, 2016). Communicative teaching and students' participation are correlated, The silent students reflect the reality that emotional elements that cause their inactivity prevent them from engaging in the teaching and learning process (Muhayyং et al., 2023).

Some of the research conducted was by Kurniatillah et al. (2022) showing that when a teacher talks in the classroom, they are particularly giving information or opinions about the subject matter and clarifying it. In the classroom, students engage in discourse about taking the initiative, particularly when it comes to voicing their own opinions. This fosters positive interactions between the teacher and students.

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To foster a communicative teaching and learning environment and encourage students' reaction and language skill development, teachers can also interact with their students in the classroom by providing corrective feedback (Liskinasih, 2016). Although the intention is to make corrections, Maolida (2013) previously observed that the use of corrective feedback could produce ambiguity for teachers who prefer to provide positive feedback, such as praising and applauding the students, instead of corrective feedback. Al-

Munawwarah (2021) presented her findings, which were still connected to classroom interaction and communication and suggested that the teacher's activities were centered on assessing the students' comprehension of the text and enhancing their skills, particularly their speaking and reading abilities. Her study's findings can be used to look at how much effort students put into their studies and how that effort is related to their performance in assessment.

Sembiring (2018) examined how students interacted with one another during cooperative learning, which was like the current study. She paid particular attention to language functions, cognitive components, and social factors. The analysis revealed that these three elements are skillfully integrated and developed in students' interactions. However, the readers were not given explicit access to the detailed findings pertaining to the cited utterance or the students' quoted utterances as examples of interpretation.

While knowing that communicating in the classroom has important roles in determining the learning success, a lot of research has conducted to analyze and proof this phenomena. Nevertheless, most of the research emphasized the communication between teachers and students, or the teacher instruction in delivering the while the unique learning environment obtained from communication between students was rarely studied. Therefore, emphasizing the formal communication between students in formal context as in teaching and learning activities is the novelty of the current study. Seeing the previously mentioned introduction related to the phenomena, this current discourse analysis paper was written to know: 1) What kinds of written and spoken formal language forms are used by the students in the classroom, and 2) What are the purposes of written and spoken formal language form used by the students in the classroom.

## **METHODS**

A descriptive qualitative design was applied for this study. Additionally, as part of the sociolinguistics study, the researchers used discourse analysis in this study to examine language, writing, speaking, and conversation (both verbal and nonverbal). The researchers observed and recorded in order to collect the data. Ultimately, the data analysis result was given as a description of words rather than a numerical value. The eighth-grade junior high school students of Cirebon Regency served as the research subjects. The formal language that the subjects spoke in class was taken into consideration when choosing them. One of their points of consideration in choosing speaking formally is to avoid speaking impolitely in the context of classroom communication. Starting with the transcription, the data analysis process involved identifying the IRF pattern of the classroom interaction (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975), classifying the interactional features, examining student discourse to determine the purposes of utilizing some particular kinds, and assessing the IRF pattern as a tool for classroom interaction analysis.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The information pertaining to the results is taken from the recordings of the in-class activities. The notion of formal and informal discussions, which was modified from Eggins (2001), served as the basis for the extracts. Five features characterize formal conversations that take place in EFL classrooms, especially student talks. These included complete form, politeness phenomena, meticulous turn-taking, neutral language, and titles, which were primarily used in interactions between lecturers and students. On the other hand, there was absolutely no evidence of the other three formal speaking traits: modal deference, modal for suggestion, and incongruent mood choice.

### Neutral Lexis

**1) Data 1:** One student from group A was writing some terms which related to the expression related to congratulating someone. Then, that student asked the other students whether some of them had ever heard those kinds of expressions in their daily lives. This observation was conducted during the first meeting of the “congratulation expressions” material.

S1: Kalian tahu, situasi apa lagi yang terkait *congratulations*? (Do you know what other contexts in which we congratulate someone?)

S2: Ketika momen wisuda. (During the moment of graduation.)

S3: Ketika teman kita menikah. (When our friend gets married.)

**2) Data 2:** A student from group C was asking her members whether they knew the situation at school on which they could congratulate others. The teacher had given the examples, and they must write at least two more situation examples besides those which had been mentioned already by their teachers before the discussion.

S1: Apa lagi? (What else?)

S2: Ranking satu. (Getting the first rank.)

S3: Mungkin nilai terbaik. (Maybe best score.)

**3) Data 3:** In group D, one student was asking whether the written answer was already complete and correct or whether there was something to add or revise. The student asked her friends by utilizing a neutral form of formal expression in her speech.

S1: Sudah? (Already)

S2: (not saying anything, only nodding)

S3: Beres. (Done.)

**4) Data 4:** In group D again, one member of the group was asking whether the answer sheet could be submitted directly. One of those asked a simple question.

S1: Langsung dikumpulkan? (Just directly submitted?)

S2: Sok atuh monggo. (Yes, please.)

### Full Form

**Data 1:** One student from group A was asking about some situation that had been explained in the previous meeting. It was about some situations in which people congratulate others.

S1: Ingat tidak contoh lain yang disebut minggu lalu? (Do you remember some other examples that had already been mentioned last week?)

S2: Saya ingat, Ibu Guru menyebutkan kita memberikan ucapan selamat pada seseorang ketika seseorang mendapatkan juara, mendapatkan nilai bagus, dan membuka bisnis baru. (I remember, our teacher said we congratulated others when they win some competition, get good grades, and open a new business.)

S3: Kita juga bisa memberikan ucapan selamat ketika seseorang melahirkan. (We can congratulate others too when they have a new baby.)

**Data 2:** In group B, the students were discussing whether the mentioned situation could be categorized as a situation in which people can congratulate others.

S1: Bagaimana ketika teman kita sakit? (What if our friends were ill?)

S2: Maksudnya kita mengucapkan “semoga lekas sembuh”? (Do you mean we say, “Have a prompt recovery”?)

S1: Ya, seperti itu. (Yes, that is it.)

S3: Itu termasuk ke dalam expression of hope and wish, bukan congratulation. (That is categorized as the expression of hope and wish, not congratulation.)

**Data 3:** One member of group C asked the other members about the translation (English) version of the congratulatory expression.

S1: Kalau bahasa Inggrisnya, “Selamat atas terpilihnya kamu menjadi ketua OSIS tahun ajaran 2023/2024,” itu apa ya? (What is the English translation of, “Selamat atas terpilihnya kamu menjadi ketua OSIS tahun ajaran 2023/2024”?)

S2: Hmm .... I think it is, “Congratulations on being elected as OSIS leader, academic year twenty-twenty-three, twenty-twenty-four.”

### Politeness

**1) Data 1:** In group B, the students were correcting the wrong sentences written in their answer sheets. Then, some members chose the proper correction for some error sentences.

S1: Eh, sorry, ini maksudnya tambah s kali ya, congratulations on your championship. Iya kan ya, congratulations, ada s di belakang. (Uh, sorry, maybe it should be added s, congratulations on your championship. Is that right? Congratulations with s at the end)

S2: Oh, ya, benar. Makasih ya. (Oh yes, that is right. Thank you.)

**2) Data 2:** When group C was discussing, one of the members wanted to add some examples of congratulating expressions at the workplace. Another member did not think the example was appropriate, and she tried to say it politely.

S1: Selamat karena sudah gajian. Bisa ya? (Congratulations on your salary. Is that right?)

S2: Ti, maaf, kayaknya kalau selamat karena sudah gajian, gak bisa deh. Kalau selamat atas kenaikan gaji atau kenaikan jabatan, bisa tuh. Maaf kalau salah. (Ti, sorry, I do not think we can include congratulating expression for receiving salary. For salary increase and getting higher position, it can be. Sorry, I might be wrong, though.)

S1: Hm ... iya juga sih Sin. Oke itu tadi aja. Sok tulis coba Sin. (Hm ... well I think so, Sin. That is okay. Please write it.)

### Turn Taking

**1) Data 1:** In group A, the students were talking about expressions of congratulating someone that can happen in the office or workplace contexts. They were trying to brainstorm and imagine the situation at the workplace. It was hard because to know the workplace situation, they should at least read relevant text or watch relevant content.

S1 & S2: Naik gaji! (Salary increase!) They said this together.

S1: Nah itu, kamu benar. Naik gaji. (That is it, you are right. Salary increase.)

S2: Ada lagi? (Anything else?)

S1: Hm ... belum kepikiran lagi. (Hm ... I have not thought about anything else.)

S2: Ah, naik jabatan. (Ah, job promotion.)

**2) Data 2:** Group B was discussing the materials, and when someone wanted to say something, someone else was also starting to say something.

S1 & S2: Eeeh ... (Starting to say something together.)

S1: (Only smiled, and with the hand sign, letting S2 to speak first.)

S2: (Smile first, nods as she thanks for the opportunity to speak) Ketika diterima di Universitas impian. Bisa kan ya? (When someone is admitted to his/her dream university, can it include?)

S1: Sama ketika teman kita dapat pekerjaan. (And when someone gets a job.)

## Neutral Lexis

**1) Data 1:** The conversation reveals that one student was inquiring about the circumstances in which other students should offer congratulations to others. In order to create a clear and understandable phrase, the students choose to respond to the question using a neutral lexicon. In answering the question, the phrases "on the graduation event" and "when our friend gets married" stood to highlight the specific occasions. It was selected to make their response simpler. Then, they merely put it in writing form as a sentence, "We congratulate someone when someone wins a competition, graduates, and gets married."

Seeing this discourse, there is no significant difference between the spoken and the written forms of the utterance. The difference is that they write the answer in complete sentence form, while in the spoken form, they just answer the phrases. Outside the perspectives about the students' social interaction and enthusiasm in this discussion, the answer that they said was correct, and it was written well.

**2) Data 2:** Like the previous conversation, this conversation was also about asking what situation in which students can congratulate each other. The other members then tried to answer without making complete sentences, even if it was in Indonesian (their L1), which of course they did not have any problem making complete sentences about. Because this paper is limited to the discourse analysis of formal speech between students during the class discussion, this finding can be a reference for further research observing whether the students' simple or short answers are influenced by their motivation in the discussion and how to make them engage more.

**3) Data 3:** By the end of the discussion, one needed to ask her friends whether the answers were complete or if there was something to add to the answer sheet. She only said one word, "already," while what she meant was asking, "Is the answer complete already?" The shortened question was sometimes needed in formal situations to make the communicant focus on the main point of the questions, that there is nothing more to discuss, or the communicator does not need any more explanation about other things.

In responding to the question, the other students gave simple answers that also interpreted the use of neutral lexis. One student chose to nod without saying anything, and another student only said "done". Nevertheless, the answers given by the two students were understandable, and they answered the question well to the point in an understandable way too.

**4) Data 4:** The question, "Just directly submitted?" was the shortened version of the question, "Can we submit the answer sheet now?" Though it had been asked already that the answers were all okay, the communicator tried to confirm again whether her friends had something to add or revise related to the result of the discussion. The answer, "Yes, please." is the neutral lexis, which did not only mean letting the member submit the answer sheet but also confirmed that the answers were all done well and that the answer sheet of the group discussion project was ready to submit. Though not saying the whole sentence, only the point of what the sentence was about, the question and the answer were clear enough, and that both the communicator and communicant understand each other's meaning. The effectiveness of communication appears from this conversation through how someone asked the question and how other members answered the question using the neutral lexis or simplified form.

## Full Form

**1) Data 1:** The conversation shows students' two complete sentences in answering the questions when discussing within the group. The complete sentences were affected by the way the question was given. The question was about the material in the previous week. They tried to recall it while answering, and this led to the production of the whole sentence to convince the people about what they could remember their teacher said and that they paid attention to the class last week. Meanwhile, in the writing form, as they wrote on the answer sheet, they made some points to make it simple, like below:

We congratulate someone when someone:

Wins competitions

Gets good grades

Has a newborn baby

- 2) **Data 2:** In asking and answering the question during the discussion, the students say the whole sentence form. Full-sentence form conveys the complete thought in the pattern of sentence order according to grammar rules, which at least contains one subject and one verb. Full-form expression is used when the idea they need to convey is somewhat complex and can lead to misunderstanding if conveyed in partial form.
- 3) **Data 3:** Student 1 conveyed the idea in the whole sentence to bring the accurate meaning, as she asked about the translation method. From this conversation, she seemed to have a full-thought idea that she brought within a complete sentence, and she wanted other members to translate the whole sentence of her idea as what she thought. Another student then answered by giving the translation version in complete sentences.

### Politeness

- 1) **Data 1:** During the discussion, saying that someone is wrong is impolite and quite provoking to show the value of a member's personality. The bold-typed words show that the students tried to maintain the value of politeness within the group discussion. This conversation shows two politeness expressions from both the communicator and the communicant. When one student wanted to make some corrections, he said sorry to avoid the interpretation that he was trying to outperform others. Moreover, in responding to the correction, to avoid bad feelings between members, another student who wrote the sentence on the answer sheet said that what he said was true. He said thank you to appreciate the correction. He wanted to show that the correction was okay and it did not shade him, or he did not mind at all anyway.  
In the written form, of course, it can be seen from the conversation that it had been written "congratulation" without s, while it was incorrect because when expressing it to others, it should be added s. Then, it was rewritten with s as the corrected form. The written form showed the corrections they made from the conversation.
- 2) **Data 2:** In making corrections, student 2 did not say frankly that it was wrong or it was not appropriate. To keep the relationship with her member, who is her friend as well, and not to look and sound bossy, she used the words *sorry* and, *I think*, to give the interpretation that she was still open to disagreement anyway.

### Turn Taking

- 1) **Data 1:** From the conversation above, they had said the answer together at the same time. They recognized that it was impolite because they did not want other members judging they had taken another member's turn to speak. Then, student 1 said that student 2 was correct instead. To make sure that he did not take another member's turn to speak again, before speaking, student 2 asked others whether there was something that others wanted to say. Because no one seemed to have something to speak about, he gave another example about another situation in which people say congratulations in the workplace context, which was a job or position promotion. From this conversation, we know that speaking ethics is something that the students consider too.

In the written form, group A made it simpler. They did not even write sentences. Instead, they wrote some points of a list like below:

Expressions of congratulating someone:

At school: get good grades, win a school competition, get first rank.

At the workplace: salary increase, job and position promotion.

**2) Data 2:** From the conversation, we can see that both S1 and S2 tried to understand their position when discussing. To make the discussion run smoothly, the turn-taking management must be conducted, too. The S1 let the S2 speak first, and so the S2 started to speak as she got her turn to speak.

## CONCLUSION

The student discussion is broken down into four primary exchanges: posing queries, responding to queries, expressing agreement, offering corrections, and resolving issues via turn-taking. Those are included in the four characteristics: neutral lexis, complete form, politeness, and turn-taking. Every significant student conversation takes place during class participation in discussing some project related to daily English expression in particular situations. The teachers supervised the students while doing the discussion while recording their utterance discussing the project in groups. The students alternated between using formal and informal language in class, much like the teachers do. There are four characteristics of the formal conversations between students, as mentioned before, that take place in EFL classrooms.

From the conversation, social interaction between the students may help the students to know their position and how to be a good individual in terms of having good speech. From the discussion, the situations between the students were delicate, and there was no problem with someone hating others or someone getting hurt by others. This showed that character education in terms of speaking was crucial in maintaining the situations in the teaching and learning process. However, there still needed to be a solution that we could see in this teaching and learning process. In terms of English language use, the student did not speak English during their discussion with their friends. In language acquisition, it is essential to create an environment where the students can actively practice English, and this has to be promoted and encouraged more in the EFL classroom. The study suggests future researchers to include English real-life communication as authentic material for English immersion to support the authenticity in English communication class.

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DOI : <https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v6i4.6326>

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