

## Analysis of Interpersonal Meaning Realized in Undergraduate Students' News Item Texts

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### ABSTRACT

In the interpersonal meaning, language is seen as a tool to maintain the relationship between the speaker/writer and the audience/reader. The use of interpersonal meaning to interpret written texts is very useful to find out the writer's purpose in conveying information or giving suggestions to readers. This study aims to investigate the interpersonal meaning realized in 20 news item texts of fourth semester students of English Education Study Program academic year 2023/2024, Universitas Negeri Semarang. This study employed Eggins' (2004) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory and Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) as the research framework. This research uses the case study method because it focuses on analyzing and describing a phenomenon comprehensively. This research analyzes the realization of interpersonal meaning through mood system and modality system in students' news item texts. Based on the findings, it is found that most students use declarative mood in their news item texts. There are 379 clauses that show declarative mood in both positive and negative forms. In the modality system, two types were found, which are modalization and modulation. Modalization type is most often found in news item texts, with 38 clauses using modalization. It can be said that the students have realized the interpersonal meaning in their news item texts. This can be seen from the use of mood system and modality system in the text.

**Keywords:** Systemic Functional Linguistic, Interpersonal Meaning, News Item Text

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## INTRODUCTION

Text is a tool of communication that we use every day, whether in written or spoken. Text also has an important role in exchanging information or as a means of conveying meaning. Halliday (1994) states that text is used to exchange meaning in social interaction which includes two language functions, Giving and Demanding. This refers to the function of text as a giver and a demander. Eggins (2004) also stated that text is the use of language in a more meaningful way. We often encounter different types of text in various aspects of life, especially as a student. In academic and everyday contexts, students are required to engage with various types of written texts, such as descriptive texts that help them portray objects, people, or situations in detail; narrative text that enable them to recount events and experiences in structured and meaningful way; expository text that allow them to explain complex ideas or concepts clearly; and argumentative text that present their opinion with evidence and reasons.

One written form that we often encounter is the news item text. This type of text usually found in newspapers, online news portals and broadcast scripts, with the main purposes to inform public about events that are considered newsworthy. According to Gerot and Wignell (1994), news item texts are designed to inform readers about newsworthy events, usually because they have a significant impact or attract public attention. In its writing, the utilization of the language in news item tends to have a critical style in an effort to build a relationship

between the writer and the reader. This shows that writers are not just using news item text to convey information, but also that they want to exchange meaning with readers.

In creating news items to convey information or meaning, the choice of language towards the audience is not the only thing that students must consider. Things like culture and social background are obstacles faced by students when presenting information using the chosen language. Halliday (1978) states that language is a product of social processes, culture interpreted as a semiotic system. This shows that it influences how language is used and understood, because language is an integral part of culture. These factors can cause the information presented to have to be carefully processed with the right choice of language in order to achieve the intended meaning. Firnawati and Samsi (2015) found that language use greatly affects how to read and understand the information conveyed. Sometimes students do not pay much attention to this and only write news items for the purpose of conveying information.

To avoid misconceptions of meaning, students can use one of the functions of language use in the Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) framework, which is called Interpersonal Metafunction. Halliday dan Matthiessen (2014) stated that interpersonal metafunction refers to the function of language used to express social relationships, attitudes, emotions, and roles between speakers and audience. The realization of this interpersonal metafunction is interpersonal meaning. Fatmawati et al. (2024) explain that interpersonal meaning helps to understand the meaning of the text through the relationship that occurs between the writer and the reader. In interpersonal metafunction, there are two inseparable systems, namely Mood and Modality. These two systems will help students understand how language is used to interact with others who have different backgrounds.

Halliday (1978) emphasizes that Mood refers to grammatical choices to express the role of the writer in interaction, such as whether the speaker provides information (declarative), requests information (interrogative), or gives orders (imperative). Mood element is formed from Subject and the Finite, also Residue. Subject is the participant in the clause or who is involved. Finite is the part of the verbal group that expresses time or modality. Then, Residue is a complement of meaning in the clause. Residue is responsible for providing details about what happened and in what context. In the mood system there is also polarity, which refers to whether a statement is positive (yes) or negative (no). Polarity is an important part of the mood system because it affects how interpersonal meaning is realized.

Furthermore, Eggins (2004) stated that modality refers to the expression of the level of certainty, obligation, desire or assurance in language. Modality includes Modalization and Modulation. Modalization is consist of modal verbs, such as can, may, and should. Meanwhile, modulation is consisting of mood adjuncts. Modality helps writer or speakers express their attitude towards what they are means, such as how confident they are about certain information or how strong their desire or obligation is. Therefore, by understanding interpersonal metafunction, students can more easily arrange their texts to avoid misconceptions of meaning.

Many researchers have conducted various studies on the realization of interpersonal meaning in various texts. Sutomo (2015) conducted a research how interpersonal meaning is realized in online news text of Bali Times to investigate news text writers convey interpersonal meaning. The findings of this study reveal that all mood types used in news articles are declarative, implying that all clauses are declarative. Sari, Sumarium, and Djatmika (2021); Puri and Laila, (2022), conducted research on how interpersonal meaning is embodied in the Covid-19 vaccination news in the online news media. The results obtained from this research are that the writer only wants to provide information to readers in the news. This is evidenced by the writing of news texts that are easy to understand using familiar language so that the writer is closer to the reader. In addition, the dominance of declarative sentences shows that the author really wants to convey information about the Covid-19 vaccination. Rui and Jingxia (2018) conducted to understand how the interpersonal meaning of modality is embodied in news on micro-blogging media. The results obtained from this study show that there are many uses of modality in the news on the micro-blogging platform. The most common type of

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modality is modulation compared to modalization. Vrika, Mujiyanto, Suwandi (2019) conducted research to examine the realization of interpersonal meaning in the reports written by students of Universitas Batanghari Jambi. The research showed that most sentences in the text reports used declarative mood. Those previous studies investigated interpersonal meaning in various different texts. All researchers found mood types and modality systems in the texts they studied.

Based on the background above, interpersonal metafunction train students in the skill of choosing their language in arranging a text to communicate a message or information intended for the reader; in addition, interpersonal metafunction also help students to interact with the reader through their writing. Even though there has been a lot of research on the realization of interpersonal meaning in various texts, the study of interpersonal meaning in news item texts written by university students, especially students of the English Education Study Program in Indonesia, is still rarely explored. This research is also motivated by the fact that news item texts written by undergraduate students may have unique characteristics in language use compared to professional news texts. Most of the previous studies on interpersonal meaning in news texts focused on professional texts. Hence, the purpose of this study is to find out how these students at Universitas Negeri Semarang realize interpersonal meaning in their news item texts using the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) and also Eggins (2004) through the Mood System and Modality System. For this reason, this research seeks to answer the following questions: (1) How do fourth semester students of English Education Study Program realize the Mood system of interpersonal meaning in their news item texts? (2) How do fourth semester students of English Education Study Program realize the Modality system of interpersonal meaning in their news item texts.

## METHOD

This research used a qualitative case study methods to investigate research problems. According to Raco (2010), a qualitative approach aims to provide a comprehensive description of a phenomenon, so that readers can understand the complexities and nuances involved. In line with that, Creswell (2018) believes that case study method is a qualitative design where researchers explore how individuals or groups experience and give meaning to certain situations or phenomena. Therefore, this research conducts an in-depth analysis to investigate the clear information about how interpersonal meanings are realized through the text of news items written by undergraduate students and how the text affects the reader's understanding of the meaning or information conveyed by the students.

### *Sample and Population*

The sample in this research were fourth semester students of the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang in the academic year 2023/2024. This population was purposively selected because students who have taken the course are considered to have knowledge and practical skills and are able to write news in English with mastery of the necessary generic and language features. From the existing population, 20 students were taken as research samples.

### *Data Collection*

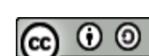
The source of the data in this research are written texts of news item as the result of the final project of the Factual and Critical Writing course, where students are asked to write news item texts in English based on actual events that they consider important. In the case of this research, the data is included as secondary data, because researchers do not obtain data directly from participants through interviews or observations, but use existing documents. As explained by Meoleong (2013), secondary data is data obtained from documents or archives relevant to research problems.

### *Data Analysis*

Regarding data analysis, the researchers used Creswell (2018) theory to analyze the data. The data analysis consisted of six stages. First, the researchers sorted and organized the data, which consisted of news item texts written by fourth semester students. Second, the researcher



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read all the students' news item texts to ensure that the texts were in accordance with the structure. In addition, the researchers analyzed each student's text piece by piece. The researcher's breakdown the students' news item text into sentences to simplify the analysis. Third, the researchers assign symbols to indicate the analysis parts. Additionally, the researchers also add category codes, which are applied to analyze the data. Fourth, the researchers provide a detailed explanation of the analysis. The researcher used the table to show the findings in the analysis. Fifth, the researcher reported the findings using qualitative methods. Sixth, the final stage of data analysis, the researcher drew interpretations from the findings related to the theories on interpersonal meaning and conversing them with experts who are lecturers specialized in this field.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis, it was found that the realization of interpersonal meaning in news item texts by fourth semester students had been achieved. The results of the analysis are presented in the table below:

**Tabel 1.** The Outcome of the Interpersonal Meaning Analysis

Category	Type	Sub-type	Total
Mood Types	Declarative	Positive	341
		Negative	38
	Imperative		8
Modality Types	Modalization	Probability	27
		Usuality	9
	Modulation	Obligation	10
		Inclination	6

### Discussion

From the analysis, two types of mood were found, which are declarative and imperative; as well as two types of modality, namely modalization and modulation. The news item texts covered topics such as increases in student boarding house prices, extreme weather, criminal actions, the 2023 National Selection for Higher Education (SNBT), and Unnes events. In this study, there are two main findings related to the research objectives, they are Mood System Analysis and Modality System Analysis.

#### *Mood System Analysis*

In the mood system, there are 379 clauses that express declarative mood in positive form, 38 declarative moods that are negative written by 15 students, and 8 clauses that show imperative mood found in the news item text of fourth semester students. According to Eggins (2004), The mood system has two components. The first component is Mood. Mood is the part that describes the mood in the sentence. Bloor and Bloor (2004) stated that the mood element is made up of Subject, Finite and Modal Adjuncts. In the student news item text, subject, finite and some modal adjuncts are used by the writer. This is proven in the findings. Students use nouns such as, "weather, boarding house, students, festival, dance, exam, etc." noun phrases such as, "the extreme weather, food vendors and small shops, a grocery store owner, a brass coaching clinic, a trumpet performance, holiday season, upgraded facilities, the students of UNNES, etc.", and pronouns *we, you, they, it, he, she, etc.*" as subjects. Then students also use finite in positive and negative forms such as, "is, was, can, is not, did not, might not, etc". The second constituent is residue. Residue is the remains of the clause that is composed of predicator, complement, and adjunct. Finite and predicator have in common which are part of the verbal group. Most of the students were using verb 2 to express their thoughts, which is in line with the structure of news item texts, that use the past tense in writing.

Most students wrote their news item texts with a declarative mood (positive or negative). Declarative mood refers to statements that are used to convey information. (Eggins, 2004). The analysis revealed two kinds of declarative mood, they are positive declarative mood and negative declarative mood. An example of positive declarative mood can be seen in the news item text owned by student number 18 in the clause, "*The event went smoothly and was lively*", the clause shows a declarative mood in a positive form, and the finite used is also positive,

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namely "went". Furthermore, in student number 6's news item text in the clause, "It is not satisfactory", the clause shows a declarative mood in negative form and the finite used is also negative, which is "is not". So, it can be claimed that the difference between positive and negative declarative mood can be seen from the use of finite and predicator written by the students.

Therefore, this section displays the realization of the mood system in the declarative mood. The use of the declarative mood in the news item text is intended to provide a statement about the topic being written to readers. The declarative mood written by students aims to provide information. Students want to convey what happens in the topic they write about. They convey evidence and issues that occur around them. This is in accord with the objective of news item text, which is to provide information about events that occur in society to readers. The application of the mood system in the news item text makes students understand the structure of the text better and makes their writing better.

In addition to declarative mood, the analysis also found another type of mood, namely imperative mood. The imperative mood is a type of mood used to express an order or demands. It is used to request, order, or suggest readers to attempt something. In the analysis, eight clauses express imperative mood. For instance, in the student number 5 news item text on the clause, "Take extra precautionary measures". The writer tells the reader to be careful when doing activities in the campus environment because there is a lot of crime. Another example in student number 2's news item text in the clause, "Maintain your body stamina". The author uses imperative mood with the aim of asking readers to maintain a healthy body when the weather is unpredictable. There are also clauses that include declarative mood but can also function as imperative. It can be seen in the text of news item student number 19 in the clause "People should maintain their body stamina". The clause asks the reader to do something while stating the writer's statement. As such, students are correct in using the imperative mood.

In summary, the mood system is realized in the student news item text. There are two types of mood used, namely declarative mood in positive and negative forms, and imperative mood. The most dominant mood used is declarative mood in the positive form. It can be concluded that the system mood is also realized in the news item text. The type of mood realized in the mood system can be different in each type of text, according to the objective of the text.

### *Modality System Analysis*

Within the modality system, there are modality words that belong to modal verbs and mood adjuncts. Those words are Can, May, Will, Sometimes, Must, Should, Probably, Still, Unfortunately, Usually, Undeniably, and Luckily. The findings show that there are several modality words in the students' news item texts that belong to modal verbs and mood adjuncts. Modality words are divided into two types, namely modalization and modulation. In modalization, it is further divided into two types; probability and usuality. From the results of the analysis, in the probability type there are twenty-seven clauses that use low modality value, median modality value and high modality value. Furthermore, in the usuality type, there are nine clauses that use low modality value, median modality value and high modality value. In addition, modulation is also separated into two types, namely obligation and inclination. In obligation type, there are ten clauses that use low modality value, median modality value and high modality value. While in the inclination type, there are only six clauses that use low modality value, median modality value and high modality value.

In terms of modalization type, several modal words are found. In low value probability, there is the word "probably". Next, in the median value probability, there is the word "will". Then, in high value probability, there is the word "must". Meanwhile, in usuality type, there is the word "can" in low value usuality. Next, in the median value usuality there is the word "usually". For high value usuality there is the word "will". In the use of median value probability, which can be seen in the news item text owned by student number 3 in the clause, "This program will be more successful in the future", the clause means that the current program will be more successful in the future. The use of probability and usuality in the

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modalization shows the function of the clause as a medium for exchanging information. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) state that modalization is related to the function of the clause as a means of exchanging information (goods and services). In addition, students' news item texts aim to exchange information so that readers are aware and understand the topics they write about in the text.

In terms of modulation type, several modal verbs are found. In median value obligation, there is the word "should". Next, in high value obligation, there is the word "must". Then, in the type for deep inclination, there is the word "can" in low value inclination. For median value inclination, there is the word "will". Next, in high value inclination, there is the word "must". In the use of high value obligation, which can be seen in the news item text owned by student number 12, in the clause "...participants must take their UTBK test on time", the clause means that the UTBK test time for participants must take their exam on time. The modal verbs that have been used show the reader to offer suggestions or to do something. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) stated that the application of modulation in clauses functions to offer suggestions to the reader or to tell the reader to do something. Students ask readers to do something so that they become better, such as the writer asking readers to do their UTBK on time.

The use of modality is divided between modalization, used for information exchange, and modulation, used to offer or tell the reader to do something. In the modality, each type has three categories of values, and the value depends on each verb used in it. So, the writer utilizes the verbs in each value category correctly.

## CONCLUSIONS

The interpersonal meaning realization in news item text has been explained in this study. Overall, the study has two primary findings. The first is the realization of mood system written by fourth semester students of English Education Study Program academic year 2023/2024, Universitas Negeri Semarang. Mood system is found in their news item texts. This is proven by the findings in this study. Analysis shows that there are two types of moods used by students. The two types of mood are declarative mood and imperative mood. The most dominant mood realized in the news item texts is declarative mood. The declarative mood found is realized in two forms, namely positive and negative. If calculated as a whole, there are 379 clauses that show declarative mood, in both positive and negative forms. Besides, imperative mood has a total of 8 clauses written by 8 students. The imperative mood often appears in news item texts with the topics of criminal actions and extreme weather. The second finding is about the modality system. Two types of modality were found in the students' news item texts, which are Modalization and Modulation. In the type of modalization, two sub-types were found, namely probability and usuality. While in modulation, two sub-types were found, namely obligation and inclination. Each sub-type shows different values. There are three values, they are low value, median value and high value. From the analysis, there are 27 clauses that show probability, 9 clauses that show usuality, 10 clauses that show bond, and 6 clauses that show inclination. So, in total, there are 52 clauses that use modality words. According to the summary above, it can be summarized that interpersonal meaning is realized in student news item texts. Interpersonal meaning is composed of two systems, namely mood system and modality system. Both systems are realized in the news item texts of fourth semester students of English Education Study Program, Universitas Negeri Semarang. In the context of the implementation of interpersonal meaning in the text, it can be argued that the fourth semester students have utilized interpersonal metafunction well. In addition, this research still has weaknesses like any other research. This research may be biased in its interpretation. Each research has its own interpretation in presenting its findings. Therefore, further research is needed for the sake of enriching the findings. Future researchers may wish to research different types of texts on different metafunctions, whether ideational or textual metafunction to enrich the findings. Future research can also use the latest

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