



## **SOCIAL ACTORS IN AN INDONESIAN EFL CLASSROOM: A CRITICAL STUDY OF CLASSROOM INTERACTION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Wenden (2005) explained that the representation of a social actor shows how the actor (people, or group) are represented in the discourse. In the previous studies there were several contexts about representation social actor, such as culture by Lawless (2004) politic by Amer (2017), and lectures of people by Dashiti (2017). In this present study discussed representation social actors in the education context that focused on teachers as social actors by using content analysis as the design of the study and categorizations from van Leuween (1996). Socio-semantic inventory also used to reveal the identities. Thus, the aim of this study is revealing the identities of two teachers during teaching English text in senior high school in Tasikmalaya. The finding showed that those teacher identities that appear as in the following: active teacher, powerful teacher, democratic teacher, facilitative teacher, and polite teacher. Thus, 5 identities found represented teacher identities in teaching English text in the classroom.

**Keywords** : Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Social Actor, EFL Classroom.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In CDA, linguists are acquainted with the term of social actor representation. This theory refers to how a person, a group of people or even a certain ideology is depicted through a text. Moreover, social actors representation proposed by van Leeuwen (1996) is one of the ways to uncover the intended meaning or perspective behind a certain text.

The teacher's self-identity is constructed through the social interactions that teachers have in a particular social, cultural, historical and institutional context, so the search for understanding personal identity involves the connection of emotion with self-knowledge. Therefore, not only the consideration of the relationships is important for an understanding of teacher emotions, but also cultural, relational and institutional aspects to need to be taken into account (Hagenauer & Volet, 2014).

Thus, this study deployed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in investigating the linguistic representation of teachers as a social actor in teaching-learning English texts (implementation of Genre Based Approach) in the classroom. To do so, attempts were made to identify the principal ways through which social actors are represented in the video transcription of teachers in teaching-learning English through GBA in the classroom. More specifically, the current study focused on analyzing how the English teacher is represented as social actors during the implementation of GBA in teaching English texts.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Description of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse, which views "language as a form of social practice" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 20) and focuses on the ways social and political domination is reproduced by text and talk. That is, language is viewed as both socially constitutive as well as "socially shaped" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). As one of its central objectives, CDA considers the linguistic choices a text producer makes as a potential medium through which the ideological import of a particular discourse situation can be reproduced. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) usefully translate this into the "working assumption" that "any part of any language text, spoken or written, is simultaneously constituting representations, relations, and identities" (p. 275). In particular, discourse represents particular world views, particular social relations between people, and particular social identities according to the purpose, context and addressees of the text.

### B. CDA in Educational Contexts

The term education has been defined as "informal and formal learning opportunities for in-service teachers for elementary and adult students" (Rogers, 2004, p. 11), according to her, learning opportunities can take place in the school building (e.g., in classrooms and also meeting rooms), supported by national policies. One of the assumptions of critical discourse analysis is based on this fact that uneven power between speakers and listeners, readers and writer is related to their different accesses to processes of linguistic and social situations. Therefore, critical discourse analysis presumes that institutions such as school can promote the mastery of discursive practices: the discourse, texts, genres, the lexical and grammatical structure of everyday language. This idea can be construed as a reframing of questions about educational equality according to how systematically deformed and ideological communication provides situations for differential institutional access to discursive resources, the very educational competence needed for social and economic relations in information-based economics (Luke, 2003).

### C. Description of Social Actors

Representation of a social actor is associated with how actors (one or group) are represented in the discourse. Representation depends on specific perspectives from which social actors are constructed. Wenden (2005) explains that representation of a social actor refers to the language used in a text or talk to assign meanings to groups and their social practices, to events, and to social and ecological conditions and objects in discourse analysis (e.g., Fairclough, 1989, 1995a, b). The network was proposed consists of three main types of transformation: deletion, rearrangement, and substitution. In other words, the network shows whether the social actors were excluded or included; whether through rearrangements, different roles were assigned to different social actors; and whether any substitutions were used in their representation. The analysis of the representation of social actors in this paper employs six categories. The researcher chooses these representation categories because they are the most suitable, relevant and applicable processes to examine how the social actors are represented.

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#### **D. Previous Studies on Social Actor**

Mioni (2016) investigated how English language teaching textbooks portrayed male and female social actors according to their social roles and gender identities in ELT textbooks, Top Notch series, by using two analytical models: Van Leeuwen's (1996) framework and Halliday's transitivity model (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). The results revealed that male social actors as the dominant group were represented with superiority over others. The outcomes recommended that educational programs employ textbooks which can compensate for the shortcomings of the ideology behind the male and female representation in the current ELT textbooks.

Sadeghi (2016) attempted to analyze the representation of males and females at the Iran Language Institute (ILI) English Series. The dialogues examined critically through Van Leeuwen's framework (1996), and they proved to be gender-biased. These series depict a men-without-women world in which females are waiting for a chance to 'be', 'be seen' and 'be heard'. The results of his study are the ILI English Series has tried hard to define female characters in a new social context, by assigning them new responsibilities, but still fails to show independent successful characters who don't need to prove they are as successful and as essential as the other gender. The present study supports the fact that material designers are consciously or unconsciously biased, and the representation of female and male social actors do not reflect the real world's needs and standards.

Amer (2017) analyzed the representation of political social actors in media coverage of the Gaza war of 2008–2009. The paper examines texts of systematically chosen news stories from four international newspapers: 'The Guardian, The Times London, The New York Times and The Washington Post'. The findings show substantial similarities in representation patterns among the four newspapers. More specifically, the selected newspapers foreground Israeli agency in achieving a ceasefire, whereby Israeli actors are predominantly assigned activated roles. By contrast, the four newspapers foreground Palestinian agency in refusing ceasefire through assigning activated roles.

Abdullah & Lulita (2018) probed how teachers and students as the social actors in an Intercultural Communication (IC) classroom were represented discursively. They reported that social actors in IC classroom were classified into two main thematic representations, namely positive and negative ones. Hamzah as the representative of classroom presenters was represented as victimised, oppressed, intimidated and minoritised actor. Hamzah's Mathematics teacher was described as an intolerant, dehumanising, discriminatory and oppressing actor. Hamzah's Social Sciences teacher was outlined as a racial, stereotyping, dominant and provoking actor. The Intercultural Communication teacher was drawn as the actor encouraging his students to be tolerant, critical, supportive and open-minded people. Hamzah's classmates in IC classroom were illustrated as sympathetic, supportive, friendly and reactionary actors.

#### **METHOD**

The present study used CDA as a research method of revealing how the teachers are represented as social actors during teaching and learning English texts in the classroom. It employed the socio-semantic inventory approach as proposed by Van Leeuwen (1996) as the main tool in analyzing the representation of social actors. There were ten analytical frameworks from van Leeuwen (1996) but in this study researcher only used 6 elements (inclusion and exclusion, role allocation, generalisation and specification, individualization and assimilation, nomination and categorization, functionalization and identification). The researcher only used 6 elements because these representation categories are most suitable, relevant and applicable processes to examine how the social actors are represented. With

this in mind, those elements can accommodate and provide an in-depth representation of social actors. This approach is used to investigate how the teachers' social actors were represented in the video transcription of teaching English texts in. This approach, therefore, can help "to analyze the processes of transformation or re-contextualization and to derive its meaning" (Wodak and Meyer, 2009). In this way, this approach is appropriate to help the study answers the research questions.

The data from this study was document analysis of two video transcripts in teaching and learning English texts through GBA at vocational school in Tasikmalaya, west of Java, Indonesia. This study responded the gaps provided by the previous study particularly such a study having the relevance on investigating how is the implementation of GBA in teaching English texts and the challenges faced by the teachers in implementing GBA. Y's study used Halliday's System Functional Linguistic (SFL) approach Theme and Rheme for analyzing the data. Thus, this present study used CDA as a research method for revealing how the teachers are represented as social actors during teaching and learning English texts in the classroom. It employed the socio-semantic inventory approach as proposed by van Leeuwen (1996) as the main tool in analyzing the representation of social actors.

The researcher analyzed the data from the video transcripts of teaching-learning English texts in the classroom by using the analytical framework was mainly based on Van Leeuwen. The reason for opting for van Leeuwen's model lies in the fact that this is the only comprehensive framework in CDA studies that lend itself very nicely to the analysis of discourse when a representation of actors are looked at from a social standpoint (Sahragard, 2010; Abdullah & Tandiana, 2019).

To analyze the ways through which social actors were represented in the video transcription, the researchers applied a Critical Discourse Analysis was mainly based on Van Leeuwen's framework (1996). In Van Leeuwen's framework (1996), there are three main types of transformation framework; deletion, rearrangement, and substitution. According to these main types of transformation, social actors can be represented, verbally or visually. However, this study only emphasized on verbally because the data from this study was document analysis from video transcripts.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher obtained the findings of this research from the analysis of video transcripts in teaching English texts in the classroom. The analysis used socio-semantic inventory analysis (van Leeuwen, 1996) to reveal how the social actors are represented in the video transcripts in teaching English in the classroom. Thus, it could shape teachers' identities. The investigated social actors are focused on the English teachers, their interactions, and language use in the classrooms. Thus, teachers' identity could emerge.

### **A. Types of English Teachers' Identities Viewed from Their Interactions and Language Use**

Based on the analysis of social actors represented in video transcripts, the researcher concluded teachers' identities as follow:

#### **1. Active Teachers**

Austin defined (1962) a performative as an utterance which contains a special type of verb (a performative verb) by force of which it acts. In other words, in using a performative utterance, a person is not just saying something but is doing something (Wardhaugh, 1992). Austin (1962) also claims that from the grammatical point of view, performative utterances are first person's indicative active sentence in the simple present tense. Based on the analysis video transcripts, in the role allocation category, the researcher found that teacher E used 178 times active utterances and only used one passive utterance, while teacher M used 129 times active utterances and she did not use passive utterances. It means that teacher E and M are active

teachers. According to an American language philosopher, Searle (1962), speaking a language is performing speech acts, acts such as making statements, giving commands, asking questions or making promises. Teacher E and M frequently asked the students with several questions during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. As in the following;

Duration	Activities
00.01	(Building Knowledge of the Field), (teacher prepared her slide presentation) Today, we will learn about procedure text, last week we have already discussed, <b><u>do you still remember what we have discussed last week?</u></b> Last week, we have already discussed the obligation and now, we will learn about procedure text. <b><u>Have you ever learned about this?</u></b> (T)
00.21	Yes (Students answered together)
00.24	Okay, <b><u>in the first or second class?</u></b> (T)

(Transcript #1 teacher E, first meeting)

In transcript 1, teacher E starts the teaching-learning process by asking the students and stimulated them to remember the material they have learned before.

00.52	Okay, students, <b><u>I ask you what did you study last week? Do you still remember?</u></b> (T)
01.01	Noun phrase (Students answered together)
01.05	Noun phrase, up to your hand. (she raised her hand) <b><u>Who knows what is a noun phrase?</u></b> (T)
01.10	(one of the students said) <i>Kata Benda yang di terangkan oleh kata sifat</i> (student 1)
01.13	<i>Kata benda yang di terangkan oleh kata sifat</i> or <b><u>can you explain in English what is a noun phrase?</u></b> (T)
01.26	Adjective and noun (answering from student 1)
01.28	The adjective explains about the noun or it calls modifiers noun phrase. (T)
01.35	(Building Knowledge of the Text) Okay, for today, <b><u>we are going to learn about describing a place.</u></b> (teacher wrote describing a place in the whiteboard) <b><u>What is describing place?</u></b> (T)

(Transcript #2 teacher M, first meeting)

In transcript #2, teacher M asked the students about the material that they have learned before in the last meeting. The students answered that the teaching material they have learned last week was a noun phrase. Moreover, the teacher

asked the students more specifically about a noun phrase such as what is a noun phrase and asked the students to explain the noun phrase in English. Besides, when the teacher told the students that they were going to learn about describing a place, the teacher asked the students about describing a place.

## 2. Powerful teachers

Teacher E and M were powerful teachers. It showed by category of functionalization frequently appears more than identification category based on the analysis video transcripts. Proven by teacher E and M who have multiple roles. They gave the instruction and a direction to the students in the classroom. Moreover, it showed from teachers' ability in managing the class, such as dividing the students into several groups and setting

14.30	<p>Okay, <b>now, we discuss</b>, <i>bisa yah?</i> <b><u>Saya minta tiga kelompok saja sebagai perwakilan untuk presentasi to present the result of your discussion</u></b>, who will come first, (one of the students raised his hand) Aldo come on, what's the group? (T)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Transcript #1 teacher E, first meeting)</p>
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In transcript 1, teacher E is powerful. There is the word 'now, we discuss' means that teacher decided that moment was time for students to make a discussion about the material. Moreover, the teacher also Asked three group of students to present the result from their discussion. It showed that teacher has the power to ask the students to conduct several activities in the classroom. The students seemed powerless because they should follow the teacher's rules.

33.52	<p><i>Alhamdulillah</i>, Now let's practice, (teacher continued her slide) <b><u>I want you to make a group of four, please.</u></b> (after students sitting in their groups, the teacher gave students worksheet about the descriptive text) <b><u>this is the job sheet for you, one paper for one group, fill this paper based on the text, and then the text is page 70. Please fill about social function, generic structure, and then the language feature of the text.</u></b> What is the title of the text? (T)</p>
35.42	<p>Tanjung Puting National Park (Students answered together)</p> <p><b><u>Find the social function, generic structure, and the language features, please do it in ten minutes, after that when you finish, fill this paper, one of the students each group have to present in front of your class.</u></b> Do you understand? (T)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Transcript #2 teacher M, first meeting)</p>

In the transcript #2, teacher M has a role to manage the students to divide students into 4 groups. Teachers also gave the worksheet for students and asked them to find out the social functions, generic structures, etc. Besides, teacher M also has rules for the students to carry out the assignment only in ten minutes. Also, the teacher wanted one of the students each group has to present his work in front of the class. McCroskey and Richmond (1983) stated that legitimate power often is referred to as "assigned" power. It stems from the assigned role of the teacher in the classroom. Legitimate power is based on the student's perception that the teacher has the right to make certain demands and requests as a function of her/his position as "teacher." This type of power generally is most related to mundane matters, such as controlling classroom time, determining what unit should be studied, regulating interaction, and the like. Those all show that teacher M is powerful and including as legitimate power teacher that could manage the students, has rules, gives the direction, and manage the time in doing teaching-learning activity with the students in the classroom. The students are powerless. They should follow the teacher rules.

### 3. Teacher E and teacher M are democratic teachers

Morrison (2008) stated that Democratic education can take multiple forms, ranging from the micro-level of within-class democracy to the more-ideal macro level of whole-school democracy, and within each level, several different democratic practices can be enacted. For example, at the micro-level, a teacher can utilize discussion. Based on the data, teacher E and teacher M utilized the discussion in the classroom. They asked the students to make a group discussion to discuss the material. As in the following excerpt:

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**Okay, thirty students. I divided your class into eight groups.**  
 Let's start from you (she pointed the student sitting in the left side) (T)

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(Transcript #1 teacher E, first meeting)

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33.52                      *Alhamdulillah, Now let's practice,*  
 (teacher continued her slide) **I want you to make a group of four, please.**

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(Transcript #2 teacher M, first meeting)

Senturk & Oyman (2014) argued that Teacher candidates defined a democratic educational environment as a place where all students can express their ideas without fear, where teachers and students have an equal voice, where all thoughts are cared about, and where peaceful and safe communication processes are maintained effectively. Based on the video transcripts, teachers let the students speak up and express their opinions when conducting the discussion with the other students or in answering teachers' question.

As in the following;

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27.02    The second paragraph, the third paragraph, all the paragraph except the first paragraph, okay, let's see, **Febrian mengatakan the description of this text, it is the second, third, and the fourth paragraph.** (teacher answered the description of the text in the PowerPoint) that's right. **Okay, give applause.** (they are applauding) *Nah paragraph dua sampai paragraph empat ini adalah about the description. Okay, now part three about language feature.*  
**Participant? Who can explain about a participant?** (T)

28.18    **People (answering from student 7)**

- 28.20 **Not people, this text talking about the place, so the participant is place. Apa?** (teacher waited for students to answer) *hah...*(teacher waited for students to answer) **apa?** (T)
- 28.46 **The pacific highway (Students answered together)**
- 28.48 And then (T)
- 28.50 **The numnah valley, the lamington national park, the cave through which a waterfall, the main picnic area, the rock pools, picnic area. (Students answered together)**

(Transcript #2 teacher M, first meeting)

Related to the transcript # 2 of teacher M, teacher stimulates the students to speak up by asking the students with several questions. In addition, there was a student named Febrian that delivered his opinion about the material. It is proof that students can express their ideas without fear. Teacher E also prised Febrian by asking another student to give applause to him because of his answer was right. Peaceful and safe communication processes are maintained effectively during the teaching-learning process.

Knowlton (2000) stated that in the student-centred classroom, the teacher is not the sole voice of intellectual authority, the only one who has been endowed with knowledge worthy of dissemination. The student also dispenses information by assuming the role of an active participant in the day-to-day rigours of developing an understanding of course materials. Besides in process, a student-centred approach requires collaboration and dialogue among students and the teacher (Andriani & Abdullah, 2017). Based on the video transcripts, teachers let the students speak up and express their opinions when conducting the discussion with the other students or in answering teachers' question. Teacher M used students' centre approach just like teacher E. she frequently stimulates the students with several questions during teaching the students in the class.

#### 4. Facilitative teachers

Characteristics of a teacher's philosophy who is attempting to be facilitative include: changes the role of teacher to guide, coach, and advisor; instils a natural discussion and decision-making process; utilizes strategies and methods that maximize the learning process; transports the students successfully along with learning levels from knowledge/comprehension to application/evaluation through student-chosen activities, projects, and programs; and demonstrates using academic content areas to create sharable students' products (Elam & Duckenfield, 2002, p. 8). Teacher E and M guided and coached the students to understand the material. They explained the teaching material briefly to the students. Moreover, they conduct the discussion as a method for teaching students to maximize the learning process. Telling which is part in the material probably exist in the national exam, offering the students to ask the teacher, if they are still confused about the teaching materials, and giving the review and conclusion about the material they have been learned. It showed that teacher helped and make the process of students' learning easier. As in the following extract;

04.28

Yah. How to make chocolate-dipped strawberries. If someone asks you what is the text about? **Ketika ada judul, jawabanya adalah judul. Ingat ya, nanti kalau ada di UN. If you find the question about the text, what is the**



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	<b><u>text about? If there is the title of the text the answer is the title of how to make chocolate-dipped strawberries.</u></b>
	What kind of text is it? (T) (one of the students answered the question of the teacher)
47.02	subject plus verb one <i>atau</i> simple present. <b><u>Ciri kedua atau language feature yang kedua adalah first, ada second, ada finally, ada then, after that, etc.</u></b> <i>Kamu sudah tau, tapi tidak tau disebutnya apa atau istilahnya apa, istilahnya adalah relational process atau ada juga yang menyebut sequence set, yang menunjukkan sequence, sequence itu apa tadi? Steps. langkah atau tahapan-tahapan, bisa dipahami? Do you understand? <b><u>Ada pertanyaan? Boleh dicatat silahkan.</u></b> (T)</i>
48.07	Students wrote a language feature of the text
48.24	<b><u>Let's review, what is the social function of procedure text?</u></b> (T)
48.41	(One of the students said) to know how to make something

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(Transcript #1 teacher E, first meeting)

In transcript 2, teacher M explains the teaching materials clearly and asked them to remember the important part of the teaching materials that probably exist in the national exam. After that, the teacher offered the students to ask something they do not understand and let them write the point of the material that they have learned. It indicates that the teacher facilitates what students need to make the students understand. Before ending the teaching-learning process, the teacher with the students concludes the material they have learned by asking back about the material.

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46.00	.....please fill about social function, generic <i>strukturenya</i> and language <i>featurenya</i> , <i>tapi textnya cari sendiri</i> browsing yah, <i>setelah itu print terus kerjakan seperti tadi</i> , <b><u>mengerti? Any question?</u></b>
51.00	No (Students answered together)
51.06	<b><u>Jadi apa yang bisa anda tangkap dari pembelajaran hari ini?</u></b> For identifying the text, <i>dilihat dari apa saja?</i> You can see, first, (teacher and students said together) social function, generic structure, language feature. A social function can be found in the first paragraph, <i>kalau generic strukturenya</i> , identification and description. Terus language <i>features</i> , the noun phrase and

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simple present yah, please remember it and don't forget. For your homework, still in the group, please find the text about by using descriptive text in describing a place, *pertanyaannya sama seperti yang di job sheet*. Please find social function, generic structure and language *features*, *tapi textnya cari sendiri* browsing yah, present it next week. Any question?

(Transcript #2 teacher M, first meeting)

Teacher M also offering the students to ask something they do not understand about the teaching materials they have learned and concluding by asking back to the students about the teaching materials.

### 5. Polite teachers

Said (2011) argued that being polite is to attempt to save face for another, and not to hurt him. Politeness is, of course, a set of social skills whose goal is to ensure that everyone feels relaxed in social interaction. Related to Said's argument, teacher E and teacher M are polite teachers. They did not use rude words or inappropriate words in teaching the students in the class. Also, either teacher E and teacher M, they used formal context to make interaction with the students. For instance, when they said "saya, anda, and kalian". It is a formal context in Bahasa Indonesia to say "I" and "you". Moreover, based on the analysis, the individualization category mostly appears in both teachers video transcripts. It shows that teacher E and M have known with several students in the class. It means that even though the teacher used the formal context but they were closed with the students because they could remember several students' name. As in the following excerpt:

29.10

.....Can you find of the noun phrase?  
Up your hand! (teacher raised her hand)  
*Apa saja?* **Eka, Asti, Nisa, Salman**, (no one students raised their hand) Okay, glow worms. ....

(Transcript #2 teacher M, first meeting)

### CONCLUSION

The study aimed at finding the teachers identities in teaching English texts. It looked so closely from the language used and the interaction of the teacher with the students in the classroom. It helped the teachers to identify their identities based on their language use in teaching English texts in the classroom. The findings showed the identities of the teachers are; 1) active teacher. For example, the teacher frequently asked the students with several questions during teaching-learning in the classroom and using mostly active utterances than passive utterances during the teaching-learning process, 2) powerful teachers. In this case, teachers have multiple roles, could manage the time in process teaching-learning process in the classroom and have several rules to manage the students, 3) democratic teachers as an example, the teacher let the students speak up and express their opinion in a classroom, 4) facilitative teachers. In this case, the teacher explains the material

briefly, offering students to ask something they do not understand and making conclusion and reviewing the material they have learned 5) polite teacher. As an example, the teacher did not use rude words or inappropriate words in teaching students, the teacher also used formal context in teaching students. Thus, those five identities are represented the teacher identities in teaching English texts in the classroom.

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