

## The Interpersonal Meanings Used in the Drink Labels

Dias Andris Susanto

[diasandris@upgris.ac.id](mailto:diasandris@upgris.ac.id) / [diasandriss@gmail.com](mailto:diasandriss@gmail.com)

University of PGRI Semarang

### ABSTRACT

This research aims at describing the Interpersonal Meanings used in the drink labels. The objectives of this research are to investigate clauses and their constituents realized in the English sentences used and to map out the interpersonal meanings realized in the clauses on the drink labels. The writer used qualitative descriptive analysis to find out the characteristics of English sentences used in the drink labels. The object of the study is the sentences used in the drink labels. The unit analysis is a clause used in the drink labels. The data were collected by the use of document. To analyze the data and Method of data analysis, the writer took some steps; there are identification of 19 products of the drink labels, identification of the labels, identification of the sentences used in the drink labels, and identification of interpersonal meaning. The result shows that, the 19 drink labels have 79 clauses and each clause has different constituents there are two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and ten constituents. The dominant constituent is nine constituents. The interpersonal meaning realized in the labels are; a) exchanging information which consists of giving information and demanding goods and services. b) Exchanging goods & services, which consist of demanding goods & services, and giving goods & services. The dominant interpersonal meaning on the drink labels is declaratives mood – giving information of exchanging information. It has 58 clauses. On this drink labels, there is no interrogative mood – demanding information of exchanging information. It is suggested that labels are good media for teaching English. By understanding the meaning of the labels, students and or readers will get the knowledge about the meaning of the clauses on the drink labels. They also will get the benefit of the drinks. The other researchers would be able to continue analyzing for the next steps using different points of view.

**Keywords:** *interpersonal meanings, drink labels*

## Introduction

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a study of language that views language as two characteristics, systemic and functional. It is systemic because SFL uses theory of meaning as a choice, by which a language or any other semiotic system is interpreted as networks of interlocking options (Halliday, 1994: 14). It emphasizes meaning as the fundamental element in analyzing language. Language is also functional because it is designed to account for how language is used. In the scope of SFL, there are fundamental components of meaning called metafunction. According to Halliday, the functional components are ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning and textual meaning (1985: 13). The interpersonal meaning is concerned with the interaction between speaker or writer and listener or reader. Its function is to enabling of exchanging roles in rhetorical interaction: statements, questions, offers and commands.

The interpersonal functions play the role of setting up and maintaining social relations, and indicate the role of the participants in the communication (Halliday, 2002). The interpersonal

metafunction comprehends a text's tenor or interactivity which is again comprised with three components: the speaker/writer persona (whether the writer or speaker has a neutral attitude, which can be seen through the use of positive or negative language) social distance (how close the speaker are) and relative social status (whether they are equal in terms of power and knowledge on a subject). The researcher is interested in revealing the interpersonal meaning using mood structure. According to Halliday (1994: 68), it is through the interpersonal metafunction that people establish, negotiate and assume their position in social relationship, and it is concerned with clauses as exchange. The interpersonal meaning begins with defining basic speech role: giving information, giving goods-and-services and demanding goods-and-services, respectively called statement, questions and commands (Halliday, 1994:68).

In business, English is used as a means of producing goods and services for profit. In giving service to the customers to promote their products, there are many kinds of language that are used

by the producers. The English used in drink labels represents a form of written communication which contains various kinds of sentences. Each sentence within the drink label implies the writer's purpose as to give information, to persuade, or to warn.

According to Hornby (2004: 133), the word drink is liquid for drinking; amount of liquid that you drink, or alcohol/ an alcoholic drink; something that you drink on a social occasion. So in my study I would like to show many drinks based on the definition above. Some of them are energy drink, milk, solid vitamin, nata decoco, tea drink, juice, nutritious drink, drinking water and yoghurt drink. Then the word label itself is a piece of paper, cloth, etc fixed to something to describe what it is, who owns it. On the other hand it states that label is describing something in away that is too general or unfair stated by (Hornby, 2004: 238). Then the writer would like to describe many labels (fixed on the bottles

### Review of Related Theories

Functional grammars view language as a resource for making meaning. These grammars attempt to

describe language in actual use and so focus on texts and their contexts. They are concerned not only with the structures but of their products). They are, for example: ***Protocal Solid Vitamin C and Calcium:*** "Appropriate for children's growth, pregnancy and breast feeding period. Also appropriate for poor health, after surgery and for the elderly. Protocal solid effervescent helps speed up wound healing and bones recovery, bone decaying as well as teeth anomaly". ***Nata De Coco Coconut Fiber:*** "Quality you can trust from selected fresh young coconut, more enjoyable to drink cool". ***Nestle Bear Brand:*** Ready to drink milk, Bear brand milk, Bear brand is made from fresh cow's milk, sterilized, whole some and delicious, Bear brand is easily digested and is recommended for all purposes for which milk is required, Shake tin before opening."

### Research Problems

I describe the problems into; a) How are the clauses and their constituents structured in the English sentences used on the drink labels? b) How are the interpersonal meanings realized in the sentences used on the drink labels?

describe language in actual use and so focus on texts and their contexts. They are concerned not only with the structures but

also with how those structures construct meaning. Functional grammars start with the question, ‘How are the meanings of this text realized?’ (Gerot and Wignell, 1995: 6)

Traditional and formal grammars would analyze our earlier clause as follows:

**It**      **provides**      **antioxidants**  
**Noun**   **verb**            **object**

Systemic – functional grammar, on the other hand, labels elements of the clause in term of the function each is playing in that clause rather than by word class.

One of the first things we need to do in language is explore what we mean by the term *grammar*. To many people it signifies a fairly rigid set of rules for speaking and writing, the breaking of which will mark you out as uneducated, unsophisticated or even uncouth. It is true that the word *grammar* can mean something like a grammar book or a set of grammatical rules, particularly rules that people will keep breaking unless they are firmly taught them. But there is another sense of the word that means something like *the way in which a language is organized*, as stated by Butt, et al. (1996: 25). This point is not always readily accepted in English – speaking countries, partly because of an educational tradition

of concentrating on only some parts of the language. In speaking English, we all follow *rules of grammar* which rarely, if ever, attract much attention. One of the most basic interactive distinctions is between using it to exchange goods and services. A second distinction is between demanding and giving. We can therefore demand information or give information or demand or give goods and services.

#### Metalanguage of interaction

##### a. The Finite

The Finite is that part of verbal group which encodes primary tense or the speaker’s opinion.

##### b. The Subject-Finite relationship

The strong interaction between the Finite and the nominal group known as SUBJECT is a fundamental relationship in English grammar. The significance of Subject-Finite relation can sometimes be seen in the effect of the Subject on the Finite. When the nominal group in the Subject role changes, from singular to plural, or from first person (I, we) to third person (she, the team, they), the finite may reflect the change in its form.

##### c. Mood

The mood or mood block is the name given the Subject and finite plus the polarity

d. Predicator

The rest of the verbal group, including any other auxiliaries, is simply described as the Predicator because it is the basis for the predication, or validation. Predicator of a simple declarative sentence is the word (sometimes a group of words) which does not belong to any of the referring expressions and which, of the remainder, makes the most specific contribution to the meaning of the sentence (James and Bregdan, 1983:44).

e. Modal Finite

Modal Finite is Finites which encode the speaker's opinion rather than tense.

f. Polarity

Polarity state of having two opposite qualities or tendency (Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary, 1991)

g. Adjunct

Adverbial groups, nominal groups and prepositional phrases which acted as circumstances for the experiential meaning of a clause are now simply known as Adjunct

because they are added on to the Interpersonal meaning.

h. Complement

Other nominal groups may be regarded as Complements because they complete argument set up in the clause

i. Residue

The predicator, Complement (s) and Adjunct (s) make up the Residue of clause.

### Research Methodology

This research belongs to a qualitative research employing descriptive approach. It is called qualitative because the data used are in the forms of descriptive data such as words and sentences. It is suitable with the characteristic of qualitative research which is stated by Sutopo (2006, p.35) and Moleong (2004, p.11) that data of qualitative research are words, sentences or pictures rather than numbers. This research describes linguistic phenomenon representing the interpersonal meaning in the drinks label. As stated by Sutopo (2006), descriptive qualitative method is a method that emphasizes the descriptions of the situation to support and emphasize the detail, complete, and deep analysis of the data.

This research employs descriptive method because the data collected are described clearly. As the approach, this research applies interpersonal meaning theory as the frame of Systemic Functional Linguistics. The research scrutinizes the interpersonal meaning of drinks label which is realized by the products to give information and attract consumers. Source of the data; Arikunto (2006: 129) states that source of data in a research means the subject from which the data are acquired. According to Lofland (in Moleong, 2004, p. 157), the main

source of data in qualitative research is in the form of words and action. The source of data for this research are the labels that on the products which can be gotten at the supermarkets around Semarang. Meanwhile, Blaxter et al. in Santosa (2012) categorizes data into two types, primary data and secondary data. The primary data refers to the data gained by researcher directly from the source of data, whether secondary data refers to the data obtained by other researcher to support the research.

### **Findings and Discussion**

Based on the classification of drink labels from the interpersonal meaning, the writer can make generalization that can predominantly be classified as in the drink labels which are analyzed in this thesis are identified as a Declarative Mood. There are sixty eight clauses. Following are the analysis based on the Interpersonal meaning:

#### **Exchanging Information**

##### **a. Giving Information - Declarative Mood.**

From the 79 clauses that can be found on the drink labels, the most dominant mood is **declarative mood giving information. It has 57 clauses.**

Apparently, the labels' producers want to give more information about the product to the costumers. It is important because the costumers have to be interested in the product by knowing the benefit, advantages or the good things that will we take from the product we buy. To get misunderstood, the labels' producers try to give information by designing sentences put on the drink labels about the product itself.

Declarative mood is causing giving information, the subject precedes the finite. In this exchange of information, the subject and the finite

are both present or can be easily recovered from preceding text. The order of subject and finite in the mood block shows whether information is given or demanded. It's an example of declarative mood used in drink labels. The data number (2) is identified as a declarative mood. The clause is as follow:

*‘It is also appropriate for poor health, after surgery and for the elderly’.*

The declarative mood can be shown by the subject and the finite. ‘it is as subject and ‘is’ is as finite. So the diagram is as follow:

It is also appropriate for poor health, after surgery

Su bje ct	Finit e (pres ent)	Ad ju nct	Predic ator	Complement
Mood: declarativ e		Residue		

and for the elderly.

Complement
Residue

The other example which is included declarative mood is the data number (30): the clause is as follow:

*“It is rich in vitamin A, C and E”.*

This clause is informs that Country Choice has/ contains Vitamin A, C and E”

and the declarative mood can be shown by the subject (Country Choice/ It) and the finite (is). So the clause is as declarative mood. Look at the diagram below:

*It is rich in vitamin A, C and E*

b. Demanding Information - Interrogatives Mood From the 79 clauses that can be found on the drink labels, there is no **interrogatives mood demanding information. It has 0 clauses.**

There are no questions / interrogatives found on the drink labels. It seems, the labels’ producers do not want to give demanding information about the product to the costumers. It is less important because the costumers do not want to demand about the product so far. As matter of fact, the costumers will not demand to the product’s creator. What they need is knowing the good things if they consume the product for themselves. That why the labels’ producers do not put the demanding / interrogative words in the labels on the drinks.

In demanding information the configurations use **Interrogative Mood**. Speaker demanding information normally asks questions. Sometimes they ask in Polar Interrogatives, which expect a yes/no response. Sometimes they want

specific information and ask **who, when, where, how, which, what, whom, whose or why?**

**Exchanging Goods and Services**

**a. Demanding Goods and Services –**

**Imperatives Mood**

From the 79 clauses that can be found on the drink labels, the less dominant mood is **imperatives mood demanding goods and services. It has 10 clauses.** Likely, the labels’ producers want to give order or command to the costumers about the product. Usually this order or instruction is taken to make the costumers understand about hot to consume the product. But then, there are only a few that uses the instruction because the labels’ producers think that it is less important. The costumers have already understood in using or consuming the product. That is why they prefer put the information rather that the instruction.

Imperative mood is demanding goods and services may give order or commands. In the most common form of this type of exchange there is no apparent subject and finite, but, if they wish, speakers can make their demands more emphatic by adding a subject or a finite.

It’s an example of imperative mood used in five drink labels. The data number (4) is included imperative mood. The clause is as follow:

“Shake tin before opening”

Subj ect	Fini te (pre sent )	Predicat or	Complement
Mood: declarative		Residue	

This clause is imperative mood because gives command that the speaker wants the consumers to believe and get the best quality of Bear Brand Milk As we look at that the clause has no subject. To make clear look at the diagram bellow!

Finite (present)	Predicator	Subject	compleme nt
Mood: imperati ve	Residue	Mood:	Residue

Shake tin before opening

The other example of an imperative mood can be shown in the data number (12) the clause is as follow:

“Enjoy the refreshing green tea less sugar”

This clause is imperative mood because it gives a command that the speaker wants the consumers to enjoy the refreshing green tea less sugar. To make clear look at the diagram below!



Enjoy the refreshing green tea less sugar

This clause is imperative mood because it gives command that the speaker wants the consumers to just enjoy the drink. It consists of Predicator (enjoy) and complement (the refreshing green tea).

#### **b. Giving Goods and Services – Declaratives Mood**

There are 79 clauses that can be found on the drink labels, it is less dominant mood. The mood is **declarative giving goods and services. It has 11 clauses**. Actually, this mood is similar to declarative mood in exchanging information, but the message is different. Speakers who are offering goods and services do not have recourse to any special configuration of the Subject-Finite relationship, so this type of exchange does not have a special mood but is identified through the context of the message.

The labels' producers, who are offering goods and services through the products of the drinks, do not have recourse to any special configuration of the Subject- Finite relationship, so this type of exchange does not have a special mood but is identified through the context of the message. The writer in analysis it

Finite (present)	Predicator	Complement
Mood: imperative	Residue	

has to consider about the context of the message itself. It is done in order to differentiate about giving information and giving goods and services.

For example; in clause no. **39) Nekta is the original kiwi fruit**. In this clause, **it is declarative mood in giving information**. It describes the message that the labels' producers want to give information about the product is that Nekta.

On the other occasion, the clause no. **44) It greatly helps your digestion and boosts your immune system**. It is similarly declarative mood, but it is **declarative in giving goods and services**. The words 'help your digestion and boosts your immune system is giving services in message.

Based on the result of the research the data analysis which is mentioned in the previous chapter, the researcher can make the following conclusions: 1) All of the clauses of 19 drink labels which are analyzed; the writer divides them into 79 clauses. The drinks are compiled from all kinds of drinks that can be bought or found in supermarkets. The most dominant labels are *NU Green Tea* and

*Country Choice*. They each have **9 clauses**. And the minor labels are *Love Juice so Juicy Orange*, *Sun Fresh Apple Juice*, *Choco Malt*, *Sun Quick*, and *Dutch Milk UHT Yogurt drink*. They each have **2 clauses**. 2) Based on the **Interpersonal Meaning** in English sentences used on the drink labels, viewed from the **Exchanging Information**, they are giving information

– declaratives mood and demanding information – interrogative mood. And the other one is **Exchanging Goods and Services**, they are; giving goods and services – imperatives mood and demanding goods and services – declaratives mood.

## References

- Butt, Fahey, Spinks, Yallop. 1996. *Using Functional Grammar: An Explorer's Guide*. Macquarie University.
- Creswell, John .W. 1994. *Research Design Qualitative and Quantitative Approach*. London: SAGE Publication
- Frank, Marcella. 1972. *Modern English*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc
- Glanz, Jeffry. 1998. *Action Research An Educational Leader's Guide to School Improvement*. Norwood, Massachusetts: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.
- Halliday, M.A.K. 1994. *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. United Kingdom: St. Edmundsbury Press Ltd.
- Hornby. 2004. *Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary*. Oxford University Press
- Hurford R, James and Heasley, Brendan. 1983. *Semantics a Course Book*. Cambridge University Press.
- Moleong, Lexy J. 2002. *Metodologi penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya
- Murphy, Raymond. 1985. *English Grammar in Use*. Australia: Cambridge University Press.
- Ramelan. 1992. *An Introduction to Linguistics*. Semarang: Semarang Press
- Richard, Jack. 2002. *Long man Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. Malaysia: Long man
- Schramm, Betty. 1989. *Understanding and using Grammar*. PRENTICE HALL REGENTS Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458
- Stewart. 1980. *Business English and Communication*. Graw Hill
- Surachmad, Winarno. 1994. *Pengantar Penelitian Ilmiah*. Bandung: TARSITO Bandung
- Sutopo. 2006. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Surakarta: UNS
- Wardhaugh, Ronald. 1977. *Introduction to Linguistics*. Toronoto: MC. Graw Hill Company