Implementing Effective Language Functions to Create EFL Interactive Learning Atmosphere

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Keywords: Language functions; EFL Teachers; interactive learning

Abstract: This study focuses on identifying the language functions effective for fostering EFL(English as Foreign

Language) interactive learning atmosphere. It explores the corpus of data taken from EFL teachers' utterances, which contain various types of language functions during classroom interaction. Secondary data cover in-depth interview to uncover the effectiveness of the language functions used. The analysis involves Tribus framework (2017) rooted in Jakobson's (1960) style of language function. The result showed that EFL teachers had employed various language functions during teaching and learning process with the dominant types covering referential function, phatic function, and emotive function. These functions can effectively foster interactive learning atmosphere in the EFL class, particularly in a high school setting with large class size. Future studies are expected to explore other EFL context in a higher level of learning to bring up other

dominant functions effective for creating interactive learning process.

1 INTRODUCTION

Teachers in their role should be responsible for the results of the learning activities of children through the interaction of teaching and learning. The teacher is known as one of the educators who are the best informant to reach the purpose of the study. Soelaeman (1985) said that the behavior and teacher's speech has a role in conveying ideas and information, training skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking), and developing attitudes. Besides, Richards and Renandya (2007) stated the interaction between teacher and student has a significant role, and it deals with the use of teacher's language that can give a significant effect on the way student communicates what they get well from teaching and learning activities. Thus, the teacher's utterances become the medium to reach the learning achievement by interaction and communicative competence (Cazden, 2017).

The definitions of language function have been discussed by some linguists. One of them is, according to Brown and Yule (1983) that there are two language functions; it is transactional function and interactional function. A transactional function is a function to express content while the interactional function is a function of language in social relations

and personal attitudes. The teacher, as the medium of transferring the knowledge in the class, has a role in controlling some stages in the learning process using the interactional function. Teacher's interactional function further support leaner's interactional competence started from the classroom practices (Pekarek-Doehler, 2018).

Moreover, language function is needed in communication because it can give the manner to catch the meaning. A language function explains why someone says something (Beare, 2018). Therefore, language function is essential to investigate because it is the basic understanding of communication, which the purpose of doing interaction can be conveyed.

There are some studies concerning with language functions. The first study done by Andani (2015) found language function in Caretakers Nanny Mcphee in the big bang movie using Halliday theory of language functions (1977). The second study done by Ambrosio and her friends (2015) found language functions in children's classroom discourse, the result showed that children's classroom comes to learning experience when they use language functions to explain children's purpose in negotiating to mean using Kumupulainen & Wray framework (1997). The third study done by Hayuningtyas (2017) found language functions in tutors' utterances using Van Ek theory of language functions (2011). Based on the

study done above, there is not enough explanation about language functions applied in teaching and learning English in formal education, and the researcher provides another theory of language function.

Inevitably, the use of language function by a teacher has taken an essential part in which to know the information built by the student is interrelated with the teacher's explanation. It, in turns, supports student's acquired knowledge (Gass, 2017). Besides, teacher and students interaction become significant in all studies due to the educational context in which knowledge is obtained, especially language learning such as, English as a foreign language (EFL). Therefore, this study aims to investigate the use of language functions by EFL teachers in Ma'arif NU Junior High School Blitar and also the purposes of each function by EFL teachers in constructing interactive learning during teaching and learning activity using Jakobson theory (2017) of language function and Sack (1960) approach of adjacency pairs in conversational analysis. Specifically, this study intends to examine the following questions:

- 1. What are the effective types of language functions utilized to foster interactive EFL teaching-learning process?
- 2. How do the language functions encourage the interaction between teacher and students?

2 THEORETICAL REVIEW

The theoretical of this study is primarily based on the pragmatic area, which focuses on language functions. Pragmatic defines as the study which identifies about the language used in communication; it does not focus on the set of the rules and the sign but it involves two parties communication both addressee and addresser (Aijmer & Ruhleman, 2015). The statement before stated that language in pragmatic as the instrument of communication. Pragmatic works beyond the knowledge of the language and the linguistic component. It is written by Chapman (2011) that pragmatic firmly tells the study about language in use can be interpreted through context; not only from the systematic rules. It portrays a pragmatic aspect is connected to the situation and condition of the speaker to know the language production not only has a literal meaning, especially it brings impacted of communication goals. From that aspect, this study covers the pragmatic area in the goal of an utterance or language function toward the goal of interactive learning activities.

As the work of pragmatic is in the social interaction between addresser and addressee, this study also utilized conversational analysis (CA) as the approach to write the data analysis. It is one of the steps in a qualitative method which deals with social interaction (Coulthard, 1977). There are several points of conversational organizations by Sacks as quoted in the conversational analysis of journal article (Hoey & Kedrick, 2018); turn taking, sequence organization/adjacency pair, turn design, and repairs. This study only focuses on the conversation part between teacher and student underlined in the explanation of the adjacency pair. Adjacency pairs (AP) are a group of two persons which the utterances of interaction have the same function (Chapman, 2011). Based on the conversational analysis by Hoey and Kendrick, there are some types of adjacency pairs; greeting-greeting, question-answer, requestacceptance/declination, offer-acceptance/declination, invitation-acceptance/declination, assessmentagreement, and complaint-account. The use of adjacency pairs in this study is to maintain the research data in seeing the coherent topic inside talkactivities.

About the idea of this study, the main theory to analyze the data is language function by Jakobson as cited in the poetic function in the theory of Roman Jakobson (Waugh, 1980). There are six types of language function proposed by Jakobson created from six factors of verbal communication. Those are referential function, emotive function, conative function, phatic function, metalingual function, and poetic function. Tribus (2017) develops the new version of language function by Jakobson in teaching and learning. It contributes to the significances of each function toward teaching and learning strategy. Some significances of Jakobson's model connected with EFL teaching have some purposes. Tribus (2017) stated that (1) referential function is expected to help students interpret their cognitive ability with seeking out the referent of the knowledge and also draw the contextual knowledge, (2) emotive function is expected to help student more understand about their social relationships with controlling their intonation in expressing feeling, (3) conative function is expected to help students interpret the meaning of the information, (4) phatic function is expected to keep the connection between addresser and addressee, (5) metalingual function is expected to give effective feedback from the student for seeking specific information, and (6) poetic function is expected to lead the students knowing the meaning of idiomatic expression. From those six types of language functions before, this study investigates

what functions have a big effect on class interactive in the teaching and learning process.

3 METHOD

This part outlined the process of doing this study. The study used the descriptive qualitative method as the research design. Qualitative is research methodology in which concerned on a description and interpreted the data rather than the counting of feature (Wray & Bloomer, 2011). The data of this study are explained through description and explanation. The data sources of this study were two EFL teachers in Ma'arif NU Junior High School Blitar. Besides, another secondary data source was students in Ma'arif NU Blitar which studied in first and second of Junior High School. This study also limited the data from the teacher's utterances, which used language function and also the students' responses.

As the research instruments, this study applied two instruments. The first was observation (nonparticipation) to investigate the first research question. Then, the second was an in-depth interview with the EFL teachers to seek out the detailed information in answering the second research question. The data analysis of this study was done in some stages. The first stage involved the classification of language functions used by EFL teachers based on the theory Jakobson (2017). The second stage involved identification the data by explaining the context and also the use of language function from each category by Jakobson (2017) and decided the classification through the conversational interaction scripts which have been written appropriately with Sacks (1960) as quoted in the conversation analysis (Hoey & Kendrick). Last, the third stage involved the description and discussion of the functions based on the interview's result and continued to make findings and discussions.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Language Functions of Teacher 1 (T1)

Session 1

This part discussed the result of language functions in the opening session on T1 utterances.

Table 4.1: Interaction in opening.

Conversation	Adjacency Pairs
T:Good morning, students!	Greeting-Greeting
S:Good morning teacher	

The conversation in table 4.1 was successful in conversation, which involves understanding the continuity between the teacher and the student, and it occurred when T1 started the class with a morning greeting. The use of the word was not only for greeting, but the teacher tried to invite the students to enjoying the class by showing expression. It was identified from the first pair part of the teacher's talk is always followed by the student's response; it is called greeting in adjacency pairs. Besides, the teacher also used emotive function during the opening; it already showed that students' response was active and enjoyable. In this case, T1 created a goal of teaching and learning as a result of her language use in the opening session as what she already said during the interview:

"When I say hello or any other words to the student and also ask about their news, I want to be able to unite with students and also make them focus on my learning in the order they can be comfortable following me. Besides, we also need to know whether students are ready to start learning or not. When students are not ready, we also need to give them time. Also, especially with a greeting, I want students to be more focused and also feel cared" [T1: 1].

The statement above-identified that the language used by EFL teacher had a function to show the expression or emotional feeling. This function builds up an enjoyable or comfortable situation in beginning the class. Jakobson's types of language function by EFL teacher's utterances in table 4.1 are called as an emotive function since the teacher always used expressive words.

Session 2

The next discussed the result of language functions in warming up on teacher 1 (T1) utterances.

Table 4.2: Interaction in warming up.

Conversation	Adjacency Pairs
T: What is the last month in one year?	Question- Answer
S: The last month in December T: And now, how many days in February?	Question- Answer
S: Twenty eight days	

in table 4.2 The conversation involves understanding the continuity between the teacher and the student, and it occurred when T1 wanted all members of the class to focus before entering to the core lesson. The use of language was not only to ask about the knowledge but also to stimulate the students in communication actively. In this case, T1 did not mention all students explicitly to answer, but they directly understood to give a response. T1 used some simple questions which are related to the context of the day, month, and date. The question-answer generally checked the students' comprehension, and most of them answered correctly. It also includes two types of adjacency pairs, namely offer-acceptance and question-answer, for creating a conducive situation. The functions found are phatic function and referential function. Those two functions had marked the way T1 treated all students to mention day, month, and date. This session showed that T1 gave stimuli using some questions before continuing the core lesson. T1 made it a tactic to get the conducive situation and active communication. Based on the explanation of T1 that:

"I ask by linking to the day and month in order the students are skilled and capable when invited to communicate. The day, month, and date are basic things, but that context is often used in communication. Therefore, I do not want students to forget the material about the day and month in the 1st semester. Besides, I want students to give a fast response, and I often ask using general context to the students such as their circumstances in order to make them easy to communicate" [T1:2].

The context used by T1 in the stimuli sentences was based on the previous material. The other Jakobson's types of language function in table 4.2 are called **the referential function** (the context of communication) and **phatic function** (getting attention).

Session 3

This session discussed the result of language functions in the main course on T1 utterances.

Table 4.3: Conversation in the main course

Conversation	Adjacency
	Pairs
T: Still remember about	Question-
adjective?	Answer
S: Yes, kata sifat, Mrs.	
T: I will make a sentence, please	Order-
translate into English! "Dia	Acceptance
laki-laki bijaksana."	
S: He is wise	

The conversation in table 4.3 involves understanding the continuity between T1 and the students to begin the whilst-teaching in the main course. In this conversation, T1 wanted to review the material, and the students have already had background knowledge on the meaning of the adjective. To asked a question to attract student back to the context of what they had learned in the previous meeting. After that, all students tried to find out the information in their English guidelines book, and then all together answered the question. Next, it led T1 to make some sentences which were related to the adjective context describing the character of a child and asked students to translate it into English. There were two adjacency pairs in this part; question**answer** and **order-acceptance**. It also had four types of language functions; referential function, phatic function, and emotive function. Those functions implied in the utterances to lead all students reviewing material and as a result of ordering pattern. It had been clarified by T1 by saying:

"I called their name also used command sentences during the teaching process to get students' attention and their direct respond. It also makes my students focused on my learning. Besides, I want to train students' minds in order to not afraid to show up themselves and another one I do want to eliminate my students' fear in speaking English. So, they can enjoy speaking in English and do not feel difficult" [T1:4].

T1 tried to ask all members of the class in getting English communication. She influenced the students by asking them to answer the questions. Nevertheless, the persuasion which occurred in the class interaction was shaped spontaneously in order to get direct students' responses. The other Jakobson's types of language function in table 3.3 and 4.3 are a phatic function (getting attention from addressee), and referential function (the context of communication).

Session 4

The last session discussed the result of language functions in the closing session on T1 utterances.

Table 4.4: Conversation in closing.

Conversation	Adjacency
	Pairs
T: Any question so far?	Question-
S: No, Mrs.	Answer
T: Do you understand about	Question-
conjunction?	Answer
S: yes, understood	
T: ok, good! the time is over, see you	Greeting-
next time	greeting
S: see you Mrs	

4.4 The conversation in table involves understanding the continuity between T1 and the student, and it occurred when T1 closed the material in that meeting. In this conversation, T1 tried to ensure the student's comprehension of the material. The question is meant that T1 told students to ask if there was a material that had been understood well. Besides, T1 wanted students' responses to the material by ensuring their comprehension of the material. In conclusion, T1 used question-answer, greeting, and order-acceptance types of adjacency pairs. There were referential functions, emotive function, and phatic function used in the closing session.

T1 used a language for some purposes. First is to ensure that the students understand the materials well. Then T1 asked a question related to the context. Second is T1 also showed up her feeling in order to give the appreciation to the whole members of the class which attended the material well. The appreciation made them freely interacted to the teacher without any doubts in expressing their emotional condition too. The third is that T1 kept to get the attention of all students until the class was ended. She used a language in commanding and inviting the whole members praying together.

4.2 Language Functions of Teacher 2 (T2)

Session 1

This part discussed the result of language functions in the opening session of T2 utterances.

Table 4.5: Conversation in opening.

Conversation	Adjacency Pairs
T: How are you today?	Question-
S: I am fine, thank you, and you?	Answer
T: I am fine too	Question-
S: Are you sure Mrs?	Answer
T: Actually, I am not fine, but	Question-
because of you, I am well today.	Answer
S: Thank you, Mrs.	

The conversation in table 3.6 involves understanding the continuity between the teacher and the student, and it occurred when she began teaching and learning by greeting all the members of the class. T2 did not only share about the conditional information but also demonstrated another relation closer as learning partner rather than teacher and student. Besides, the students have already understood to respect the teacher's effort in attending

the class behind her sick condition. From the first activity done, T2 wanted to check the preparation before going to the main course. Besides, the teacher also told about her real condition that she was not well to the students. The emotional feeling showed by T2 toward students' empathy that she tried to build up students' personality in following the class well and conducive. The adjacency pairs used by teacher and students are question-answer to open the session. Besides, the teacher also used emotive function during the opening. It already showed that students' response was free in expressing their condition. Besides, T2 felt that sharing about feeling or emotional condition each other was remarkable. This statement has been clarified by T2 in the interview section:

"I always started the main interaction with asking about their (students) condition and reciprocity from them. Because of that, I know the situation that is happening, and also it can be easier to understand the path that I will go through at that time". [T2: 1]

The statement above-identified that the language used T2 had a function to show the expression or emotional feeling. This function builds up an enjoyable or comfortable situation in beginning the class and also makes more talkative and friendly between teacher and student. Jakobson's types of language function by EFL teacher's utterances in table 3.6 are called as **an emotive function** since the teacher always used expressive words.

Session 2

The next discussed the result of language functions in warming up on T2 utterances.

Table 4.6: Conversation in warming up.

Conversation	Adjacency
	Pairs
T: Do you still remember our last	Question-
material?	Answer
S: Yes, simple past tense.	
T: Good! Zaki, please mention what is	
to be for simple past in nominal	Order-
sentence!	Acceptance
S: It is "is, am, are"	

The conversation in table 4.6 involves understanding the continuity between the teacher and the student, and it occurred when T2 gave stimulation before going to the main course. In this conversation, the teacher wanted to review the material, and the students have already had background knowledge what meant by simple past tense. In this session, the teacher linked some related questions to the last

material, and she tried to build up the students' memory. The questions also gave the students a brainstorming to structure the lesson back. As a result, the conversation before includes two types of adjacency pairs, namely **order-acceptance** and **question-answer** that held in class interaction for leading conducive situation.

Furthermore, three functions are found in the teacher's utterances; there are **referential function**, **emotive function**, and **phatic function**. In this activity, the first goal targeted was the students more active by reviewing the last material. Based on the explanation of T2 that:

"The goal in reviewing lesson is a warming up for their minds (students' mind) before they get a new material that is heavier than before. Moreover, usually, the discussion taught will have continuity with the last material. I hope with reviewing the previous discussion; then students can be active and not easily forget the material. So, not only the teacher is active in the class, but the students are also active because already known the last material" [T2:2].

The statement before stated that the teacher used a language to convey a message which referred to the context of the communication. The context used in the warming up session was about the previous discussion. The teacher also tried to keep the students' concentration using ordering sentence and also give appreciation. The other Jakobson's types of language function in table 4.6 are called a referential function (the context of communication), emotive function (expressing feeling), and phatic function (getting attention).

Session 3

This session discussed the result of language functions in the main course on T2 utterances.

Table 4.7: Conversation in the main course.

Conversation	Adjacency Pairs
T: (write the song) Simple past tense, I did Past continuous tense, I was doing The past perfect tense, I had done Past perfect continuous tense, I had been doing T: We start from a simple past, please look at the example, and what is the formula? S: There are subject and verb 2 T: She refers to the one girl, is it singular or plural? S: Singular Mrs.	Question- Answer

conversation in table 4.7 The involves understanding the continuity between the teacher and the student it occurred when T2 started to explain the main course. The song lyric is used so that all students can analyze the formula. Besides, the students also have understood that T2 instruction of "look!" did not mean that they have to be seen but also to be understood and analyzed. T2 can communication with the students because she used a song method in explaining the core lesson. The written song given in the class had a relation to the context of the material. From that song, T2 guided the students learning through analyzing, questioning, and also ordering the formula in the song.

In conclusion, T2 utterances contained three functions of language use; there were referential function, phatic function, poetic function and metalingual function in the form of ordering and questioning sentence. It had been clarified by T2 in the interview section:

"Students will refer to the additional methods; one of them is music or song. So by incorporating learning material into the song, it will be easy for students to capture what is in it as in the case of the song which contains a tenses formula. Hopefully, students can analyze by giving an appropriate example of the formulas which have been heard from the song before going to my explanation. Besides, in my opinion, this method is more effective than just relying on ordinary learning. So, students also get the essence of the material that will be discussed" [T2:3].

"I prefer a challenge. Therefore, I do not justify the mistake made by students directly. I put more emphasis on them (students) to explore what discussed before giving an evaluation to them. I think it can open their mind and they do not depend on my correction" [T2:5].

The statement above meant that that language also could be one of the varieties of methods to convey the message with understanding the pattern and also rhyme. It was identified from the structure of the song. Besides, the other language used included a definition of the message. T2 defined the incorrect answer to help students in seeking the understanding of knowledge by them. The other Jakobson's types of language function are a phatic function (getting attention from addressee), referential function (the context of communication), poetic function (conveying meaning with imagery) and emotive function (showing expressions), and metalingual function (conveying a message with a code).

Session 4

The last session discussed the result of language functions in the closing session on T2 utterances.

Table 4.8 Conversation in closing

Conversation	Adjacency Pairs
T: Yeah, that is all from me,	Assessment-
we continue to the next	Agreement
meeting. Keep your	
health! So, you can	
study hard not lazy and	
may we always in a	
health condition.	
S: Amin, and healthy soon	
for Mrs. Sri.	

The table 4.8 involves conversation in understanding the continuity between the teacher and the student and it occurred when T2 checked the students' task in a group. In this conversation, she tried to influence the students' behavior by motivating them. Besides, the motivation is used in order to keep their spirit in study especially attending English class. So, T2 tried to persuade the student being healthy and to keep their health in always before ending the class. In conclusion, she used Assessment-Agreement type of adjacency pairs, and there was a conative function used by the teacher in the closing session. Also, T2 explained in the interview section:

"After giving the material to them (students) and asking them to listen what I said, that all might seem to burden the students, but I'm here not only being a teacher but also their learning partner. So, at the end of the class giving motivation to them is one way for appreciating one each other and it makes a warm situation with students" [T2:6]

The last statement before signified that the teacher cared about keeping a good relation with the students. The teacher used a language in influencing the students' behavior and also to persuade them more respecting a time for studying. The other Jakobson's types of language function in table 4.8 are an emotive function (showing expressions), and conative function (persuading the addressee).

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Types of Language Function by EFL Teachers in Ma'arif NU Blitar

This research employed the whole factors proposed by Jakobson (1960) as cited from poetic function in

the theory of Jakobson (Waugh, 1980), he proposes six factors which influence in the process of verbal communication as action. Those six elements are also applied in this study to reach the goal of the research which is stated in the research question. Those were (1) addresser factor which was represented by teachers in this study, (2) addressee factor which was represented by students in this study, (3) code factor which was in the form of langue occurred by teachers and students in this study, (4) message factor which was in the form of teachers' utterances and students' responses in this study, (5) context factor which located in the class of English teaching and learning in this study, and (6) contact factor which was represented by the contact relation between teachers and students in this study.

From six factor above, language function by Jakobson (1960) as cited from poetic function in the theory of Jakobson (Waugh, 1980) categorizes the relation between the factor and the source of communication. First, the referential function is created from the relation between context and message. This function explains about the use of context which influences the meaning-making or the goal of the message, and it is utilized by both EFL teachers. Second, the emotive function is created from the relation between addresser and message (Hebert, 2011). This function explains about the message which is created from the addressers' condition and situation. Third, the conative function is created from the relation between addressee and message. This function describes the addressee's personality especially thoughts and feeling. Fourth, the phatic function is created from the relation between contact and message. This function describes the contact, which includes a connection between the addresser and addressee. The fifth, metalingual function is created from the relation between code and message. The function explains about a message which is organized by the speaker or addressee is in the form of code or any other sign, and it is utilized by both EFL teachers. Sixth, a poetic function is created from the relation between message and message. The function explains about a message conveyed with imagery or parable.

This study found that both teachers had their character in treating the interactive class. The first teacher mostly used the combination function between **referential function and phatic function**. The teacher wanted to always connect the material with the context of general communication and the environment. The other function used is **emotive function** and **conative function** in giving the appreciation and also persuading the students during

the class interaction. Moreover, she avoided the use of **metalingual function** and **poetic function** because the level of the class she taught is still in the first Junior High School. On the other hand, T2 utilized the whole functions in her teaching process. She emphasized on the use of **poetic function** and **metalingual function** for explaining the core material in the second of Junior High School.

Furthermore, there are some combination functions applied, such as **referential-poetic function** and **referential-phatic function**. T2 wanted that the students were able to analyze the song and get the formula of the song lyric. The other function used is **the emotive function** and **conative function**. She ensured that those functions could influence the students' respect and give effect on students' behavior. As a result, the dominant functions that occur in both EFL teachers in this study are **referential function**, **phatic function**, **and emotive function**. Both teachers used those functions when they were trying to interact with all members of the class.

5.2 The Functions of EFL Teachers' Utterances in Ma'arif NU Blitar JHS

Based on the findings, it is noted that both EFL teachers used some functions designed by Jakobson's theory of language function (Tribus, 2017) to have an interactive class with their students. The use of these functions already applied in the classroom according to its functions. The first is the referential function or context of communication. The referential function can be found in this study as the manner toward students' communication skill actively. Both teachers mostly used this function in the warming up session and also in the main course session. The second is the emotive function or showing expression and appreciation. This study showed that the use of emotive function by both teachers has a function to make students enjoyable, respect and caring in following teaching organization. In this study, the emotive function mostly appeared in the form of greeting and appreciation. The third is a phatic function or getting the attention of the addressee. This study found that phatic function has been utilized to keep the connection between teacher and students in the same focus. In this study, the phatic function can be signified in the form of command or order sentences from teachers' instruction. Moreover, the teacher's utterances expressing emotional and phatic functions also reflect their humanist expressive speech acts (Rini & Wagiran, 2018).

6 CONCLUSION

Based on research findings, the writer concludes that language functions have influenced communication between teachers and students in creating an interactive learning atmosphere. Both of the teachers used some functions such as referential function, emotive function, and phatic function during the conversation made in English learning. Those principal functions were as a strategy to keep the students actively in speaking skill.

From the research finding and discussion, the writer gives some suggestions. For both teacher and lectures, they can practice the use of the referential function, emotive function, and phatic function while doing the interaction with their students, so teacher's utterances can be one of strategy to make students more enjoyable and active in trying speaking skill. Besides, teacher or lecturer also can avoid conative function, so the communication built in the class can be responded by students not only in the form of reflection or effect on their attitude but also with verbal communication (reciprocity). For students themselves, they can know what they have to do in responding to the teachers' utterances because the teacher also needs a reciprocity interaction as the form of cooperation. Students also can understand each function as speaking training in the class. For further, the next researcher is recommended to examine the newest version of language functions theory in another area, besides formal education such as courses and home-schooling. It is also able to do language function research in online teaching and learning interaction.

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