

The Influence of Teacher's Language Impoliteness in Triggering Students' Bullying Behavior

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Abstract. *The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of teacher's language impoliteness in triggering students' bullying behavior. The participants are 96 primary school students in Makassar by using purposive sampling approach. The participants are students who have bullying cases as a perpetrator in the last one month. Observation, in-depth interview, and questionnaire are used to collect the data. Data Analysis technique employed was simple linear regression analysis. This study shows that impolite language uttered by the teacher influences students' bullying behaviors. Students who are used to hearing these impolite utterances from their teachers tend to commit bullying behavior verbally at schools since they tend to consider this behavior as an acceptable behavior.*

Keywords: *Impolite Language, Bullying Behavior, Verbal Bullying, Bullying Perpetrator Scale.*

INTRODUCTION

Bullying has become a world-wide phenomenon in the recent era which has given rise to a negative effect to young people. Some previous studies show that bullying is one of the most common forms of school violence (García-García et al., 2017; Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017; Gerlinger & Wo, 2016). There are various bullying forms like name calling, teasing, spreading rumors or lies, pushing or shoving, hitting, slapping, or kicking, leaving out, threatening, stealing belongings, and others. The majority of behaviors which have been mentioned previously can be considered as an ordinary phenomenon in the recent era, for the majority

of young people consider this problem as an acceptable behavior.

Bullying can cause severe mental health problems to both victims and perpetrators (Barker, Arseneault, & Brendgen, 2016; Olweus & Limber, 2010). Another negative effect is mentioned by Gini and Pozzoli (2013) that students who experience bullying are twice as likely as non-bullied peers to experience negative health effects such as headaches and stomachaches. There are sundry studies which examined about bullying like Forrest (2013), Hafen (2013), Roberts (2013), and Yau (2013). The studies examined the negative effects which have been given rise to bullying and factors which can trigger bullying behavior.

Other studies conducted some viable solutions to overcome bullying behaviour of students in the school or in the university (Dardiri et al., 2020; Nurhayati et al., 2020; Montero-Carretero & Carvello, 2020). The studies offered some programs and policies which can be implemented to minimize the bullying rate in the school or university.

Research linking bullying and linguistic studies is still rarely conducted by previous researchers. In fact, based on the observation result done by the researcher, it can be concluded that the communication style between teachers and their students is considered as one of factors which has caused this problem. Mantasiah & Yusri (2017) shows that some teachers tend to communicate impolitely. Some students who ever bullied their friends consider that they bully their friends verbally as they think that it is an acceptable behaviour that they are accustomed to hear at schools from their teachers. The communication style emphasized in this case is about the use of language impoliteness uttered by the teachers to their students. This study has completed the previous studies about causes of bullying.

Language politeness has become one of pivotal topics to be conducted because it can give rise to negative effects when it is neglected in a daily conversation. Politeness concerns a relationship between self-identified as the speaker and other identified participants as the hearer. Research on politeness has been a set topic within pragmatics ever since Lakoff (1973), Brown and Levinson (1978) and Leech (1983) and in fact it has been developed or conducted by some linguists by using various approaches. The social phenomenon of

politeness has been addressed using both a traditional approach (Brown and Levinson, 1978; Lakoff, 1973; Leech, 1983) and a modern approach (Eelen, 2001; Watts, 2005).

Intrinsically, there are six maxims of the politeness principle proposed by Leech (1983) which consist of tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim and sympathy maxim. Language politeness theory proposed by Leech means that speech can be classified as polite language when the speech follows the language politeness maxim. On the other hand, when the speech violates the maxim, it can be classified as impolite language. This theory is used to develop scale to measure the language impoliteness of teachers measured by using their student's perspective which in this case is students who have participated in this study.

METHOD

This is a quantitative research with causality approach. The subjects are primary school students in Makassar chosen randomly. Participants are chosen based on the meticulous considerations, and one of them is the students who has bullying cases as a perpetrator in the last one month noted by counselor teacher of the school. Based on the notes of school counselor in these ten middle schools. There are 124 students who have bullying cases as perpetrators in the last one month. However, there are 28 students who returned the consent form, and it means that they turned down to participate in this study. Therefore, the total of this participants is 96 students who consist of 72 men (75%) and 24 women (25%).

Table 1. Research Participants

Aspects	Total of students
The number of participants generally	124
The number of participants who returned <i>Consent Form</i>	28
The number of participants who signed <i>Assent Form</i>	96

The variables of this study consist of language impoliteness of teachers as dependent variable and students' bullying behavior as the independent variable. Language impoliteness of teachers is measured by using student's perspective, and scale used was developed using Brown and Levinson's theory which consist of 6

aspects or maxims. The scale had been used on the previous studies like research conducted by Yusri et al., 2012; Yusri, 2015). Student's bullying behavior is measured using Bully Perpetration Scales which is part of a larger survey called the Student School Survey (SSS) developed by Williams and Guerra (2007). The

scales were tested to the small group (30 students) to know the validity and reliability level of the scales. The reliability test result

shows that the cronbach's aplha of the language impoliteness and bullying behaviour is 0,977 and 0,955 respectively.

Table 2. The Validity Test of Language Impoliteness Scale

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
ITEM1	38,07	47,444	,709	,964	,954
ITEM2	38,10	46,921	,716	,962	,953
ITEM3	38,20	48,234	,748	,807	,952
ITEM4	38,13	47,430	,828	,871	,950
ITEM5	38,00	46,828	,831	,885	,950
ITEM6	38,07	46,892	,765	,794	,952
ITEM7	38,13	46,740	,784	,861	,951
ITEM8	38,27	45,030	,836	,911	,950
ITEM9	38,23	47,633	,829	,850	,950
ITEM10	38,00	48,138	,818	,864	,951
ITEM11	38,03	48,240	,801	,897	,951
ITEM12	38,00	43,724	,819	,892	,951

Table 3. The Validity Test of Bullying Scale as Perpetrator

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
ITEM1	19,03	34,447	,928	,927	,974
ITEM2	19,17	36,213	,925	,931	,974
ITEM3	19,17	35,109	,877	,842	,976
ITEM4	19,03	34,447	,928	,921	,974
ITEM5	19,27	35,857	,868	,835	,976
ITEM6	19,13	35,637	,903	,883	,974
ITEM7	19,07	36,202	,916	,930	,974
ITEM8	19,10	37,334	,867	,954	,976
ITEM9	19,07	37,789	,859	,958	,976
ITEM10	19,07	37,444	,911	,928	,975

According to validity analysis result, it can be seen that all items of both scales are valid as the value of corrected item-total correlation is more than 0,25. Another data collecting technique used is an open-ended interview which aims to know the forms of impolite language told by their teachers. This technique also aims to know the reasons which underlie participants to commit bullying

behavior to the other students. Data Analysis technique used is simple linear regression analysis which aims to know the influence of teacher's language impoliteness in triggering students' bullying behaviours. Another technique used is descriptive statistics which aims to explain the level of teacher's language impoliteness and students' bullying behaviors descriptively.

Table 4. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Unstandardized Predicted Value
N		96
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	19,6770833
	Std. Deviation	1,93449499
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,121
	Positive	,080
	Negative	-,121
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1,190
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,118

The table below describes the normality test result of the scales used to measure the bullying behaviour and language impoliteness of the teachers to their children. The normality test type used is one sample kolmogrov test by using SPSS 20 software. Based on analysis result, it can be seen that the sig value (0,118) is more than 0,005. It means that data of both scales has been distributed normally.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to the descriptive statistics output, it can be seen that mean of impoliteness and bullying variable are 49,06 and 19,68 respectively. The minimum score of the bullying behaviour is 16, and it shows that all participants have ever bullied the other students, and another side of the minimum score of impoliteness variable is 34. So, it proves that all teachers of participants have ever communicated to their students using impolite language.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistic Analysis

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Impoliteness	96	34	48	40,06	3,630
Bullying	96	16	25	19,68	2,315
Valid N	96				

Hypothesis Test

The previous part has been explained to measure the influence of the dependent variable to the independent variable. The researcher uses simple linear regression analysis. According to

the analysis result by using SPSS application, the analysis result shows that Sig value of the table is 0,00 lower than 0,05. It means that the model of regression analysis result can be used to describe research variables.

Table 6. Model of Regression Analysis

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	355,516	1	355,516	217,747	,000 ^b
	Residual	153,474	94	1,633		
	Total	508,990	95			

a. Dependent Variable: Bullying

b. Predictors: (Constant), Impoliteness

Hypothesis of this study consists of H0 and Ha. H0 reflects that there is no significant influence of language impoliteness to the bullying behaviour of the students. Ha reflects

that there is a significant influence of language impoliteness to the bullying behaviour of the students. The significant rate used is $\alpha = 5\%$. Based on data analysis result which can be seen

on the table 7, it can be seen that t value (14,756), and after checking t table, it is got that t table is 2,10. Therefore, it can be concluded rigorously that H0 is rejected as t value (14,756) is higher than t table (2,10). Sig value of the variable (0,00) is lower than the significant rate used (0,05). It proves also that the independent

variable influences the dependent variable significantly. According to the analysis result, it can be stated that there is a significant influence of language impoliteness to the bullying behaviour of the students. Students' bullying behaviours can be caused by teachers' language impoliteness.

Table 7. Analysis Result of Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients		
1	(Constant)	41,029	1,453		28,241	,000
	Impoliteness	,533	,036	,836	14,756	,000

a. Dependent Variable: Bullying

Discussion

There are some forms of language impoliteness uttered by the teachers to their students who become participants of this study. Some studies try to formulate the concept of politeness speech (Purnaningtyas & Hikmah, 2020; Ningsih et al., 2020; Caseli et al., 2020). The concept was used to determine impoliteness speech of teachers based on the student's perception. The further explanation related to the language impoliteness can be seen on the sentences taken from the interview result data of participants.

"Anak bodoh mentong ini"

(this child is truly stupid)

Some participants said that their teachers often say the sentence when they make a mistake. One of mistake forms done by the students is like spilling the food on the floor, breaking porcelain, and when the academic achievement of students decreases than the previous semester.

"nda ada memang guna-gunanya ini anak"

(this child cannot do anything)

When the students misunderstood towards their teacher's command. Unintentionally, the teachers said that the students truly cannot do anything properly.

"Malasnya ini anak"

(Lazy child!)

When some teachers demand their students to do something, but the students reject to do it because they prefer to play or do other activities, sometimes the teachers scold their students by saying "lazy child".

Some sentences mentioned previously by can be classified as impolite language, and

these utterances were stated directly by the students to the researcher, and they said that they are accustomed to hear the impolite language in their school. Therefore, they consider that saying impolite language like previous sentences are an acceptable behavior, and in fact the majority of participants often speak with the other students using impolite language like calling their friends as a lazy child, a greedy child, a stupid child, a liar, or shame on you and the other impolite languages. These behaviors can be classified as verbal bullying behaviors which are one of the factors that can trigger physical bullying.

The finding is in accordance with the previous studies conducted by Johansson & Englund (2020) and Stubbs-Richardson & May, (2020) showing that sometimes bullying verbal is considered as acceptable behaviour, and in fact bullying verbal can be more serious if it is not overcome properly. It can be followed by physical bullying.

The majority of participants said that the main factor which causes them quarreling with the other students because the other students cannot accept when they are called as a stupid child or a greedy child, so they fight the students who call them like this as they think that the students' speech is so impolite. Then, the other students considered that it is an acceptable behavior since they are accustomed to hear these sentences. This finding is related to the theory proposed by Terkourafi (2005) which shows that the degree of (im)politeness depends on how it is perceived, and it depends on the culture or social conditions of the speaker and hearer.

This study shows that students who bully their friends verbally have done this

unintentionally because they think that these behaviors can be accepted by all people, but intrinsically if they understand meticulously that the behavior is forbidden, they will not do it. Therefore, teachers should not speak using impolite language to the students since they will imitate the speaking style of their teachers, and it will be practiced at school and in their social environment. This finding supports the previous studies which showed that one of factors which has caused bullying behaviour is the factor of school.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

There are sundry factors which have caused bullying cases, and one of them is teacher's communication style. The data showed that impolite language of teachers influences students' bullying behaviours. Students who are accustomed to hear impolite language from their teachers tend to commit bullying behaviours verbally at school, and they tend to consider this behaviour as an acceptable behaviour. The results of this study should be considered preliminary. The study included a relatively small number of participants. The future research should involve more students not only students who ever bully their friends, but also the other students who are victims in bullying cases. The interview also must be done directly to the teachers as this study just involves students to know the teacher's language impoliteness.

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