Gendered Teacher–Student Interactions in EFL Classrooms: A Case of Muhammadiyah Senior High School Context in Papua – Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines EFL teacher interpersonal communication of gender differences in classroom interactions at Muhammadiyah High School in the composition of three different class models: (a) composition of sex-mixed learning group (male and female students in a classroom); (b) composition of singled – learning group specifically for women (only female students in a classroom); and (c) singled-learning group special particularly for men (only male students in a classroom). The pattern of classroom interaction from male and female teachers and students is largely influenced by culture or tradition and by the composition of the class gender. For example, male and female EFL teachers initiated a comparable number of interactions across all learning group composition models, but female teachers started more interactions for all learning group compositions and male teachers started fewer interactions in sex-mixed-type classrooms and specifically for female students singled learning group (student – women's classroom) while in student – male specific classroom, male teachers had a lot of open-minded interaction. Also, in mixed gender classrooms, both groups of female and male students indicated opened interactions with female teachers and male teachers, while female students learning group interact with female teachers smoothly and openly while male teachers, they maintained excessive interaction, and for male class students, they were very active and opened to interacting both with female teachers and male teachers.

Keywords: gender, sex-mixed – typed, female learning group, male learning group, English foreign language

INTRODUCTION

The Encyclopedia of Sex and Gender states the definition of sex, which creates the biological categories of men and women, stands in a paradigmatic relationship with gender. If sex refers to the biological basis of this difference, gender refers to the innumerable cultural traits that have grown around the original biological reality, and which have historically varied from place to place, culture to culture, and age to age. Perhaps the main reason for developing the concept of gender is to create an analytical distance from

biology, which is often mistakenly called 'nature' (that is a mistake) because culture is natural to humans (Douglas, 2007: XV).Gender does not simply unfold from individual biology, or from an individual predisposition to be a particular kind of person – it is not even an individual property. Gender is a social arrangement, and every individual's gender is built into the social order (Cameron, 2005).

Gender is not just a matter of equality, but rather the roles and tasks that must be performed by men and women. Gender equality (whether women have the same level of equality as men or not) depends on the social systems and structures of the communities in which they live (Savitri, 1992; Khotimah, 2009). Gender issues in Indonesia have the potential cause conflict and social change, because of the patriarchal system widespread in various communities put women on a position that is at a disadvantage cultural, structural, and ecological (Jacson, 2009). Men position in the social patriarchy system considered higher than women position. On another side, women are cornered to in reproductive matters such as look after the house and take care of the children (James & Drakick, 1993; Uyun, 2002).

Gender is a social and cultural construction that is attached by the community to groups of men and women. Culture is a very influential factor in gender construction (Douglas, 2007; Dumitraskovic, 2014). Indonesia is a country with unique tribes and cultures that are rich in differences which causes understanding of gender to become diverse. The difference in understanding is a logical consequence of gender as a cultural construction and community perception of men and women (Savitri, 2018; Uyun, 2002). This gender differentiation is then strengthened by myths, stereotypes and sexual division of tasks that apply to each sex. Like groups of men given different roles and status and division of labor with women's groups (Jacson, 2009).

Gender issues have been studied in different academic areas and from different perspectives. Early research flickered by Lakoff's (1975) Language and Woman's Place. Difference and dominance conceptualized the relationship between language and gender through the notions of difference and dominance, and, implicitly, the notion of inadequacy (Radwan, 2014; Mustapha; 2013; Rajas;2012). In the inadequacy framework, women were viewed as inferior language users and oftentimes as "the muted group" who speaks a "powerless language".

Despite the fact that some studies have illustrated that male and female teachers perform the same actions in their classrooms and even the gender of their students does not affect their teaching methods and behavior in the classroom, there are many others that emphasized the many discriminations that have been caused by the gender of both students and teachers. These discriminations and biases, indeed, can impress the quality of teaching and learning either in a negative way or in a positive way. In addition, since the matter of gender has been considered differently in different countries and people from different cultures have different views toward it, the results of the studies in other cultures cannot be generalized to other contexts especially to an Islamic context like Indonesia and Islamic Foundation schoolof Muhammadiyah where the gender has an essential role in social issues. Therefore more studies in this area are needed in order to make the situation unblemished.

This paper aims to examine the problem of gender differences in teaching English by exploring gender interactions in EFL classrooms, both students and teachers by using gender-based grouping (female gender groups, male groups, and mixed gender groups) in English language teaching.

LITERARY REVIEW

Gender in Language Learning

Regarding classroom interaction, there are some studies that have been reported the relationship between gender and language learning. They have contributed to the understanding of gender identities and their

influence in learning identities and learning processes.Rajas (2012) at first thought that boys have a better level of English than girls, but little by little he realized that girls also have a good level of proficiency. Tannen (1994) conveyed his ideas relating to research on language and gender, many of which have tried to explain linguistic strategies in which men dominate women in interactions. That men dominate women is not questioned as to how or where the source and influence of domination and intentions and other interpersonal effects are.

James and Clarke (1993) states that within the language and gender literature one of the findings most widely cited that men interrupt women more than women interrupt men. They give an example that men are more likely to interrupt and overlap women's speech than the reverse (Jule, 2004; James & Drakich, 1993; Hadidi & Monsefi, (2015). Some investigations regarding gender differences in the number of talks there is no standard empirical data. Most research findings show that men talk more than women (Jacson, 2009; Lakoff, 1975; Mahmud & Nur, 2019. However, the results have been far from consistent with questions where the sexes speak more: several studies have found that women talk more than men, at least in some circumstances, and a number of studies have found no difference between sexes in the amount of speech (Malano, 2019; Mahmud, 2018; Cameron, 2005). Gender-polarized characterizations of conversational style: cooperative or other-oriented versus competitive or individualistic (Douglas, 2007; Fairlough, 1989; Eckert & McConnel-Ginet, 2003).

The same or closely related oppositions are also advanced to describe gender differentiation in linguistic politeness and, more generally, speech-act usage (Mahmud, 2018; Mojica & Castaneda-Pena, 2017; Oktan & Cakanaga; 2015). Thus women are said to be more polite – to use language than men; and this is said to be because they are more other-oriented, more collaborative, more affective (Miller, 2003; Radwan; 2014; Rajas; 2012). Such oppositions are in many ways an advance over views of women as simply ineffective speakers who deviate from the (effective) norm set by men's speech (Jamiah, et al., 2015; Mahmud, 2010). But these polarized oppositions, however appealing we may find their more flattering view of women, are ultimately as problematic as the deficit views of women's speech that they replaced (Spackman, 2009; Rashidi, 2012; Tanen, 1993). And from a linguistic perspective, notions such as politeness and effectiveness are completely undefined (Eckert, and McConnel – Ginet, 2003; Mahmud, 2018; Jule, 2004; Malano, 2019).

Hadidi and Monsefi (2015), for example, had reported that female teachers were more interactive, supportive and acted more patiently with their students' mistakes. They asked more referential questions, gave more compliments and used fewer directive forms, but, on the other hand, male teachers used more competitive styles in their classes (Mahmud, 2010), more display questions, and one could see more evaluation on their part, while they also used fewer acknowledgment forms than female teachers. The communicative styles of the female lecturers were influenced by the notions of women's language (Mahmud & Nur, 2019).

Social and Cultural Identity of Gender in Language Learning

Culture refers to our way of life, including everything that is learned, shared, and passed from one generation to the next. Although culture endures over time, it is not static. Language, values, rules, beliefs are all part of one's culture. Culture is passedon from one generation to the next through the process of socialization (Dumitraskovic, 2014). Learning a foreign language will theoretically demand the learner to adapt his/her values and behavior (Jund, 2010). This implies that there is a strong connection between the language and culture and that it is represented in the culture of the speakers. It includes aspects such as beliefs, values and needs (Dumitracovic, 2014).

The question of culture and identity influencing foreign language acquisition happens. In many ways students are representatives of the identity and culture of their first language and where they come from (Spackman, 2009). Social class can also affect identity in language learners, this is due to a particular aspect

such as financial matters Dumitraskovic, 2014).Identity is conditioned by social interaction and social structures, it conditions social interaction and social structures at the same time. It is, in short, constitutive of and constituted by the social environment" (Minasan, 2017; Rajas, 2012; Mahmud, 2018). The performative view opens the possibility of exploring a wide range of femininities and masculinities. Consequently, Lakoff (1975), Douglas (2007), Fairlough (1989) defines femininities and masculinities as on-going social processes dependent upon systematic restatement.

Oktan and Caganaga (2015) claimthat the findings of their study approve on what is claimed by most of (the cultural practice) about the similarities between male and female teacher class management. Thehistorical trajectory at first the division of labor, both biologically and gender between men and women was considered to have the same value and balance (Spacman, 2009; Savitri, 1992; Uyun, 2002; Dumitraskovic, 2014). However, as a result of modernity, women experience marginalization in the employment sector which results in the tendency of women to do informal work that lacks legal protection and low wages (Aquino-Padlan & Dcomm, 2019; Khotimah, 2009). In addition, women's subordinate factors both social and cultural, stereotypes against women and low education also influence women's discrimination in employment (Hadidi & Monsefi, 2015; Mahmud, 2018; Mahmud & Nur, 2019).

Recent research has also resulted in a more nuanced picture of culture in which gender ideologies and practices shape learners' desires, investments, and actions with regard to what languages they choose to learn and speak. Perhaps, the best-known finding in this field is that in some contexts girls and women may be more inclined to study foreign and second languages and that they may outperform boys or men in this area (James & Klarke, 1993; James & Drakich, 1993; Sparkman, 2009; Uyun, 2002). Studies conducted in Japan show that young Japanese women are more likely than their male peers to study English, train for English-related professions, and travel to English-speaking countries (Kobayashi, 2002).

Discourse Analysis and Gender in Language Learning

To initiate with, it is appropriate to determine the term discourse. For Cook (1989) discourse analysis examines how stretches of language, considered in their full textual, social, and psychological context, become meaningful and unified for their users. On the other hand, Brown and Yule (1983) state …the analysis of discourse, is necessarily, the analysis of language in use. As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which these forms are designed to serve in human affairs. For Fairclough (1989:23), there is a reciprocality between language and society: "Language is a part of society; linguistic phenomena are social phenomena of a special sort, and social phenomena are linguistic phenomena." Coulhard (1987); Tannen (1994); and Schiffrin (1994) summarize these views as: "A definition of discourse as language use is consistent with functionalism in general: discourse is viewed as a system (asocially and culturally organized way of speaking) through which particular functions are realized.

Therefore, all these needs meet at a single point that is discourse analysis. All in all, the purpose of studying discourse analysis is to describe the conversational structures, that take place in an appropriate context. Coulthard (1987:11) also comments on the importance of discourse in language study. He states "The… major concern of discourse analysis, … is the relationship between the discourse and the speakers and hearers by and for whom it is produced – a concern with how speakers take the relinquish the role of speaker. At its most general, a discourse is a behavioral unit which has a pre-theoretical status in linguistics: it is a set of utterances which constitute any recognizable speech event (Tannen, 1993; Schiffrin, 2014; Cook, 1989; Douglas, 2007).

Mojica & Castaneda-Pena (2017) show activities in a kindergarten around literacy tasks, where gender discourse is at stake in the classroom and how this discourse relates to student identity from the times where the affirmation of power is manifested in second language practices. Further, he found out that

communicative styles emerged such as the use of assertive language (self-centered language and commands which is usually attributed to men), as well as the use of mitigated language (other-centered language and use of hedges which is attributed to women) and they were in distinctively used by both boys and girls in his study. Minasyan (2017) seeks to investigate how teachers and students position themselves in different discourses in EFL classroom interactions. Issues discussed include turn taking and interruption, praise and reprimand, class domination, teacher attention and class participation in class interactions (Oktan & Caganaga, 2015; Mustapha, 2013; Rashidi & Naderi, 2012).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The characteristic method of the present study is called a qualitative exploratory case study. It is qualitative in the sense that it is aimed at looking at teachers and students' perceptions in the case of EFL interaction in the classroom setting, with regard to gender (Hamalik, 2016).

Setting and population

The context selected for this research was a Senior High School that belonged to Muhammadiyah Foundation in Papua Province – Indonesia. It is a private school whose philosophy includes holistic preservation of Islamic values and general education. The population selected for the development of this study were all 11th grade students. There were five parallel learning groups (five classes), and the total number of students was around 150, the average number of students in each learning group consisted of 30. The research sample taken only three learning groups (three classes) by using purposive sampling with the consideration and the composition of those three different group (class) models: (a) composition of sex-mixed classes (male and female students in a classroom); (b) composition of class specifically for women (only female students in one classroom); and (c) special class for men (only male students in one class), taught by two teachers, one female and male teacher. Their ages range between 15 and 16 years old and most of them belong to a middle social class. The criteria for choosing such a population responds mainly to the sensitiveness of the issue and the conditions required to study a topic of this nature.

Data collection

In accordance with the characteristics and type of the present study, some of the most appropriate instrument for collecting information involved field notes from direct observation of classes which focused specifically on teachers' and students' discourse and the way they interacted with each other. The notes taken during the observation were later complemented and contrasted with both the audio and tape recorded information. To collect data, the researcher conducted intensive observations in six meetings consisting of three meetings for a female EFL teacher and three meetings with a male teacher. In each meeting, students had been divided into three learning groups naturally: single male sex (physic class), single female sex (physic class), and mixed male and female gender groups (social class).Subsequently, to explore teachers' and students' conceptions of gender, interviews were a way to overcome them and explore in their value systems, their world views and to find out about their feelings and reasons for behaving in certain ways and reacting to others. These interviews are conducted in small groups with students or it was called focus group interviews, where they expressed different feelings and perceptions about events in class and their peers, whereas with EFL teachers, it was conducted individually.

Data analysis

Data analysis, following the grounded theory method, involves a procedure of coding in several different ways once data collection is fairly complete. During open coding, a researcher analyzes "the field note,

interview, or other document very closely: line by line, or even word by word" (Galser & Strauss, 1999). In this intense scrutiny of the data, many possible meanings for each word or phrase are considered through the use of generative questions. During axial coding, a researcher develops categories from the generated meanings and gains an understanding of the various dimensions of the categories, their distinctions, and their relationships to each other. During the next stage, selective coding, the researcher analyzes the data once again and refers to the previous coding that has been carried out, one of the categories is chosen as the main code for understanding the data. All others become "subservient" to this code. As a researcher develops a grounded theory, he repeatedly returns to the data to ensure that it has been fully saturated in the search for categories and their properties. The researcher also conducted triangulation to employ multiple sources of data to confirm the emerging findings (Merriam, 1988).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This section explains the discussion about the results of observations of student learning activities in the classroom and Focus Group Interviews (FGI) after the observation is conducted. The implementation of FGI is related to the opinions or perceptions of individuals or groups of students about the learning of English that they follow from female and male English teachers. The researcher also conducted interviews with female and male English teachers to verify student statements related to English teachers' attitudes in treating their students in the learning and teaching process in the classroom. Additional interviews were also carried out with the headmaster of the Muhammadiyah Jayapura High School, to find out exactly why the student learning groups were grouped into specific genders, such as: female student learning groups, male student learning groups, and mixed – sex gender groups. The center of observation is students learning not the teachers teaching.

The components observed from the students learning in the classroom were the interactions with their teachers and their peers, as follows:

1. Students ask questions about subject matter that is not yet understood.
2. Student answers or responses to teacher or student questions.
3. Courage to communicate in English both with the teacher and classmates.
4. Cooperation in completing group assignments and sharing opportunities to present the results of group discussions.

Table 1 Students' Performance taught by Female teacher in Sex Based Grouping

GROUP	FEMALE TEACHER
Female Group Student	Members asked topics they didn't understand, others initiated to answer. They worked together, expressed opinions, completed the tasks passionately. Each a group member asked and shared ideas and others trying to answer questions. One asked for presentation to represent group, other members were ready to give a response.
Male Group Student	Tending to be calm, only two people asked for the topic. The teacher asked other students to answer but all were silent. A few members expressed their opinions in group works. A few asked and shared ideas and others answered questions. Most of the members spoke in turn. One presented group work tasks and others were ready to provide responses.
Mixed-Sex Group Student	Members tried to express their opinions. Female students talked to others freely, some male students felt ashamed of their opinions. some females didn't want to join male group. Some was a little bit crowded, much laugh, sometimes taunting each other. The males was a bit shy. Three females and two males were not active in group.

Table 1 above shows the differences in the way each group member participated in classroom learning

activities taught by different sex genders. Observations conducted in English learning activities taught by female EFL teacher to female sex – singled group appeared that they made good participation in classroom. In classroom learning context of EFL, each member tried to express opinions about a given topic. Some tried to explore questions that could make their discussion directed to the main problem of the topic. They also showed regularity in speaking. For group work assignments, they worked together well by actively creating and asking questions while other members tried to find solutions to a number of questions or problems raised. Female gender groups taught by female teacher, made them felt more comfortable and free to communicate in English because they thought by the teacher with the same sex who knew the secrets of women.

Different styles and attitudes can be seen in the setting of a single male gender group in which all members were male students. As observed in EFL learning taught by female sex-gender teacher, members did not show cheerful discussions that could be seen from their high tendency to be passive and silent. Only two members asked for an explanation of the topic being taught by the teacher. When female EFL teacher asked other students to answer questions that had been asked by their friends but all were silent. When group work began, only a few students expressed their opinions and worked together to complete the assignments. Only a few group members asked questions and shared ideas while others tried to answer questions. Most of the members spoke in turn. To determine a representative to present the results of the group discussion, members seemed confused, no one of members took the initiative to declare their readiness to present the result in front of the class, but instead every other member was ready to give a response.

Other different cases can be seen in mixed – sex gender. As observed in EFL first meeting taught by female sex-gender teacher, members of this group tended to be very noisy. They laughed at each other when one of them made mistaken to express opinions. During the discussion, most members tried to be active and found the solution of the problems. Female students talked to others freely, some male students felt embarrassed of their mistaken opinions. When working on group assignments, some female students did not want to join a group of men. Class atmosphere was rather crowded, laugh, sometimes mocking each other. Male students were rather shy. There were three female and two male students who were not active in group work, it was suspected they preferred to study individually.

Table 2 Students' Performance taught by Male teacher in Sex Based Grouping

GROUP	MALE TEACHER
Female Group Student	Members asked the topics they didn't understand, others initiated to answer the questions of their friends. In group work, each member expressed his opinion and works together to complete the task properly and correctly. Everyone competes to present group work. Some students from this class joked with the teacher.
Male Group Student	Tended to be silent Members are expecting each other to talk. All members expressed their opinions and worked together to complete the task. Almost all members asked and shared ideas and others tried to answer questions. Most of the members spoke in turn. One was appointed to present group work task. all study enthusiastically.
Mixed-Sex Group Student	Members try to express their opinions Questions and answers were lively. Members were cheerful (laughing and yelling) Males felt free to express their ideas as well as the females. They worked actively in group. Some female didn't want to join male group. Three female and two male keeping silent.

Table 2 above shows the performance of students taught by male teachers in sex based grouping. The intended sex-gender group is the same as the gender sex group in table 1, what is different, it is the teacher who teaches. Sex gender groups in table 2 are: female sex-singled group, male sex-singled group, and mixed

sex group (male and female).

The group of female students (female sex-singled group) taught by male teachers appeared that they always did good participation in classroom context. Each member expressed topics and opinions that he/she did not understand. They worked together in group work assignments. Some generated questions and others tried to answer questions. Members tried to solve problems together. Each group member asked and shared ideas and others tried to answer questions. a group member was appointed to present the group's work. Some members of this class joked with male teachers. From the observations in the female sex group taught by teacher of opposite sex (male sex), they felt the same as female teacher.

Different attitudes can be seen in a single gender group in which all members are male students (Doughlas, 2007; Radwan, 2014). As discussed in the second meeting, EFL learning conducted by male teacher. Many members asked for clarification related to the topics had been taught. When teacher asked other students to answer the questions, many of them raised their hands to get turn to answer. Almost all group members asked questions and shared ideas and others answered questions. One member of the group was appointed to present the results of the discussion and the other members were ready to give responses. They felt free to be taught by the EFL teacher of the same sex.

Based on the observations of the second meeting of mixed sex group (female and male) taught by male EFL teacher, showed that each member tried to express their opinions. Some female students asked questions and asked for clarification on the topics had not been understood yet. Male students tried to answer their peers' questions. Male students felt free to express their opinions and respond even though their answers were not entirely correct. When working on group assignments, some female students didn't want to join male group. Class atmosphere was rather crowded, laugh, sometimes mocking each other. Female students look rather shy. There were three female and two male students not active in group work.

Based on observations and Focus Group Interviews (FGI) regarding students' feelings for speaking English and in class, there is a difference between the reasons male and female students speak English, especially when they speak English with different sexes. Female students are more reluctant to speak English with a different gender (Miller, 2003; Mahmud, 2018; James& Clarke, 1993). They feel more like speaking English with the same sex. Meanwhile, some male students feel reluctant to speak English with a different gender, namely with female students. They dominantly stated that they could and enjoyed communicating and speaking using English well whether with both sexes, namely male and female students.

Similarly, the interaction and communication of students with teachers of different or the same sex. A group of students with a female sex group claimed that they did not make them to feel rigid in communicating with male English teachers. A group of female sex students feel comfortable speaking English with the same or different gender types (male) (Cameron, 1992; Eckert & McCornel-Ginet, 2003). While gender with male sex groups claimed to be less comfortable to communicate with teachers of different sexes (female teachers), they felt awkward when talking to female teachers (Mahmud, 2010; Mahmud, 2018). Group of students with mixed sex groups (female and male), female students have no problem to communicate with teachers of the same sex (female) or teachers of different sexes (male). While male students in mixed sex groups feel more independent (James & Drakich, 1993) with teachers of the same sex (male), female teachers make them somewhat embarrassed to communicate.

Therefore, it can be concluded that female and male students have different ways to interact. Women's single sex groups have more potential to show their kindness (Minasyan, 2017; Octan & Caganag, 2015). Participation in English discussion or collaboration, compared to single male sex groups Mixing groups men and women can also show active participation. This research proves existence 'Women's language' has been observed by Lakoff (1975) and Tannen (1994). Tannen (1993) shows that communicative skills related to women's superior language are related their differences in interactive style (Fairlough, 1989; Doughlas,

2007)) and language and power. In addition, Tannen (1994) characterizes men speeches as conflicts and women's speeches as cooperatives. This results in better interaction among female language learners because they are more active in listening and able to convey messages in harmony (Duffy, Warren, & Walsh, 2002).

CONCLUSION

A group of female sex students feel comfortable speaking English with the same or different gender types (male). While gender with male sex groups claimed to be less comfortable to communicate with teachers of different sexes (female teachers), they felt awkward when talking to female teachers. Group of students with mixed sex groups (female and male), female students have no problem to communicate with teachers of the same sex (female) or teachers of different sexes (male). While male students in mixed sex groups feel more independent with teachers of the same sex (male), female teachers make them somewhat embarrassed to communicate. Related to interaction and communication among students, female students are more reluctant to speak English with a different gender. They feel more like speaking English with the same sex. Meanwhile, some male students feel reluctant to speak English with a different gender, namely with female students. They dominantly stated that they could and enjoyed communicating and speaking using English well whether with both sexes, namely male and female students.

New perspectives on gender identity open up opportunities to explore and analyze the dynamics of the language classroom context, even though we as teachers always face male or female students. Therefore teachers should not expect them to act the same way every time, or even worse, stereotype and categorize them as the same type as other language learners. Teachers on the other hand must be aware of the cultural identity of students and must be able to determine their learning characteristics and motivation to improve their learning achievement.

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