

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN TEACHER – STUDENTS INTERACTIONS IN AN EFL CLASSROOM OF ISLAMIC JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN INDONESIA

Andi Rustandi¹

Lecturer of English Department of Universitas Galuh Ciamis, Indonesia

andru.unigal@yahoo.co.id

Ani²

English Department of Universitas Galuh Ciamis, Indonesia

Abstract: *This study is aimed at investigating how gender differences affected teacher- students interactions in an EFL classroom of Islamic Junior High School in Indonesia. This study used a research question to find out what are the differences of interaction of female teacher towards male and female students in the classroom interaction. This study took a female English teacher and all of the students in class VII D and E in one of Islamic Junior High School in Indonesia that consisted of 24 male students and 30 female students. This study used qualitative approach and classroom discourse analysis (CDA) as the research method. The instrument used by the writer in conducting the study is observation. The data from observation were then analyzed by transcribing and categorizing or selecting the data. The result showed that female teacher initiated interaction toward male students by questioning, invitation and direction and it is the same toward female students. Moreover, female teacher provided feedback toward male and female students' response by informing, prompting, encouraging, criticizing, ignoring, acknowledging and commenting. It is suggested that the role of teachers in providing and distributing equal interaction opportunities for all students regardless of their gender is very important because they not only offer language practice and learning opportunities but also help the process of language development itself.*

Key words: *Gender, Classroom Interaction, Teacher Initiation and Teachers Feedback*

Introduction

Gender differences in a group of interactions in the classroom especially in mixed- gender class lead the writer to expect the differences of teachers' interactions between the dynamics in classes with only male or female students. Consistent with several results of the previous researchers, gender inequity in mixed- gender classrooms interactions could be a major and correctable and it could be the weakness of mixed- gender classroom. As stated by Duffy et al (2001) and Kelly (1988) that the teacher tended to interact more with male than female students. Also, Sadker (1992) & Tannen (1991) as cited in Rashidi & Naderi (2012,p.30) “ teachers' treatment toward male and female students in pre-college and college level classrooms is unequal”. It absolutely indicates seemingly unjustified differences in teachers' interactions directed toward male and

female students. Moreover, it also showed that gender influences interaction in educational environment.

However, it completely becomes the issue appears in this study in which the teacher tended to initiate interaction and provide feedback more toward male than female students. Previously, there have been some researchers who were also interested in researching the classroom interaction related to this study. Such as Rashidi, N & Naderi, S (2012) documented that male and female teachers are different from each other while they interact with their students and also gender affect the pattern of interaction. Then, Jones, S.M, & Dindia, K (2004) documented that the teacher initiate more contact with male than with female students and male initiate more contacts with the teachers. While Hassaskhah, J & Zamir, S (2013) documented that three out of four categories of feedback were directed significantly more to male than female student.

More particularly, however, this study concerns on investigating classroom interaction focused on female teacher's initiation and feedback directed toward male and female students in different types of initiation and feedback. The reason of choosing this topic is because interaction is the main activity in teaching and learning process. It can help the teacher conveys the knowledge and create the classroom activity and the students can receive the knowledge and involve in those activities. But, how if the teacher interact unequally toward the students that differentiated by their gender, it must affect to the students experience and opportunity in the classroom.

Review of Literature

Classroom Interaction

The definition of classroom interaction is a two ways process between the participants in the learning process (Rustandi, 2013). In this regard, the teacher influences the learners and vice versa (Dagarin, 2004). Based on the two definitions above, it can be concluded that communication is done because the interlocutor have some goal to achieve.

In the same way, Brown (2001) in Rustandi (2013) gives the definition of classroom interaction is the heart of communication and what is communication is all about. Through the definition, classroom interaction is the core of communication in the teaching learning process. The teacher give clear understanding of the material to the students and the student will clearly understand the teachers material through classroom interaction.

The concept of classroom interaction has been widely investigated in the area of SLA such as Carvantes and Rodriguez (2012); Dabao and Martinez (2007). These investigations related to meaning negotiation that gives significant contribution the strategy of classroom interaction. Carvantes and Rodriguez (2012) investigated meaning negotiation as a strategy of classroom

interaction to give the students understanding of the material given by the teacher or vice versa. However, Dabao and Martinez (2007) investigated meaning negotiation as a part of classroom interaction. The result showed that meaning negotiation in classroom interaction is grounding procedure of the teachers to reach mutual agreement on the learner.

Gender and Classroom Interaction

The interest in the relationship between gender and classroom interaction goes back to the 1950s, especially in investigating teacher interaction toward male and female students affected by gender. It is assumed that the inequalities of teacher interactions toward male and female students are evident. Some researches also have shown that teacher interactions with male as contrasted with female. As Baker, D (2014,para.3) statement as follows:

“Teachers call on boys more often than girls, ask boys more higher-order questions, give boys more extensive feedback, and use longer wait-time with boys than girls. Teachers fail to see girls' raised hands, and limit their interactions with girls to social. Boys are usually target students and overall they receive more teacher attention than girls. The proportion of teacher attention given to boys increases as the students move from elementary to junior and senior high school. Even non-verbal teacher behaviors, such as head nodding and encouraging smiles, favors boys over girls”.

According to Hall (2011,p.11) in the language classroom, the role of teachers not only affect the amount and quality of teacher talk, but also wider patterns of classroom interaction. Mehan (1979) as cited in Yafen & Yuqin (2010,p.78) found that the general subject lesson consist of three components, they are 1) an opening phase which is occurred where the participants inform each other that they are, in fact, going to conduct a lesson as opposed to some other activities, 2) a business phase which occurred where information is exchanged between teacher and students and 3) a closing phase which is occurred where the participants are reminded of what went on in the core of the lesson.

Furthermore, Sinclair & Brazil, 1982 as cited in Yafen & Yuqin (2010,p.78) state “ in the phase of business, teachers usually do three things: telling things to students, getting students to do and say things, evaluating the things that students do and say”. Thus, most interactions will be occurred in this phase and IRF as three moves which involve: an initiating move (I), a responding move (R), and a follow-up move (F). It would be taken as the model to analyze the teacher and students interaction during teaching and learning activities in the classroom.

Teacher Interaction in Islamic Junior High School in Indonesia

Interaction of Teachers in Islamic Junior High School is not really different with a common school. The distinction is on the delivering material of lesson in the classroom. The teachers behave based on the Islamic religion view. As a result when they interacted with the students they tended to give more supportive suggestion based on the Islamic view. For example scaffolding, direct repair, content feedback, wait time, seeking clarification, confirmation check, teacher echo, teacher interruption (Wasi'ah, 2016). At the first time, at the beginning of the meeting the teachers stimulated the students by scaffolding the related material by delivering Islamic religion view.

The different between male and female teacher in term of the interaction in the context of Islamic junior high school is relatively different. According to Rashidi & Naderi (2012), the different between male and female teachers have different behavior-female used many display questions, more referential, more interactive, more supportive and patient, more compliment and less directive than male. In this regard, the male teacher and female teacher in classroom interaction have different behavior toward the interaction.

Methodology

This study applied a qualitative approach in obtaining the data. It means that the writer dealt with naturalistics setting which happend in the classroom. Creswell (1998,p.18) as cited in Doray, M.B.A (2005,p. 72) defined qualitative research as an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The writer builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting”.

Furthermore, the classroom discourse analysis was used by means of conducting observation to investigate the pattern of interaction that concerns on teacher - students interactions. According to Rymes (2009,p.9) classroom discourse analysis could be paraphrased as “ looking at language in use in a classroom context (with the understanding that this context is influenced also by multiple social contexts beyond and within the classroom) to understand how context and talk are influencing each other”. It means that classroom discourse analysis can be a tool of investigating interaction pattern that effect on learning.

One female and one male English teacher in two classes of the seventh grade students consisting of fifty four students were taken as the participants of this study. The writer purposively selected the teacher and the students as the participants because of some reasons. Firstly, the teacher graduated from postgraduate degree. Secondly, the teacher had teaching experience at least ten years. Thirdly, the teacher teaches at the seventh grade of one Islamic Junior High School. Lastly, the teacher are a female and male. In obtaining the data, the writer conducted observation

to investigate how female teacher initiate interaction and provide feedback toward male and female students response and the tendency of female teacher initiation and feedback toward male and female students response.

Furthermore, to get complete and rich data of classroom observation conducted in two sessions for each class. These observations were video – recorded to allow the writer access and record the classroom activities being observed and to help the writer analyzed, interpreted the data and to replay for further analysis to discover the overall activities in the classroom. The video recording equipment was placed at the back of the class at all time when teacher interacted to the whole class. The writer then analyzed the data of classroom observation based on the data gained from videotaping and field note.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The writer presented the extracts of female teacher interaction toward male and female students as the example of interaction process in initiating interaction in which the teacher telling things to students or getting students to do and say some things and providing feedback in which the teacher evaluating the things that students do and say that has been transcribed and analyzed for each act. Then, the writer concluded to find out the result.

Moreover, the writer got the conclusion that female teacher initiated interaction toward male students by directing questioning, invitation and direction. The teacher also initiated interaction in the same toward female students by directing questioning, invitation and direction. Furthermore, female teacher provided feedback toward male students by providing inform, prompt, encouragement, criticizing, ignoring, acknowledgement and comment. Then, the teacher provided feedback in the same toward female students by providing inform, prompt, encouragement, criticizing, ignoring, acknowledgement and comment. The following table is a result of the female teacher interaction.

Table 1
Female Classroom Interaction

Gender	Types of Classroom Interaction	Total	Percentage
Female Teacher to Male Student	Directed Questioning	48 times	62 %
Female Teacher to Female Students		29 times	38 %
Female Teacher to Male students	Invitation	33 times	62 %
Female Teachers to Female Students		20 times	38 %
Female Teacher to Male students	Directed Direction	4 times	80 %

Female Teacher to Female Students		1 times	20 %
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Regarding the use of some acts of initiation, female teacher directed questioning more frequent toward male students for 48 times (62%) than female students for 29 times (38%) of all questioning for 77 times. However, the teacher initiated interaction by directing invitation more frequent toward female students for 20 times (38%) than toward male students for 33 times (62%) of all invitations for 53 times. On the other hand, the teacher initiated interaction by directed direction more frequent toward male for 4 times (80%) than female students for 1 time (20%) of all directions for 5 times.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the teacher did initiation for 135 times, Moreover, the teacher tended to initiate interaction more frequent toward male students for 72 times (53%). In this move, the teacher directed questioning and direction more frequent. However, female teacher initiated interaction toward female students for 63 times (47%) by directing invitation more frequent. The following excerpts are examples of the classroom interaction types.

Excerpt 1 (directed questioning)

FT Does you catch the idea?

MS Hmmm..... yes..

FT Could you explain the idea you say before?

FS Its my pleasure mam....

Excerpt 2 (Invitation)

FT Would you like to come forward please....

MS Sure mam....

FT I am really happy if you come forward to write the points of the presentation

FS With my pleasure.....

Execert 3 (Directed Direction)

FT Did you understand this material?

MS No... little bit mam...

FT Did you get it?

FS Yes.....

Table 2

Female Teachers' Feedback

Gender	Types of Classroom Interaction	Total	Percentage
Female Teacher to Male Student	Inform	18	72 %
Female Teacher to Female Students		7	28 %
Female Teacher to Male students	Prompt	15	68 %
Female Teachers to Female Students		7	32 %
Female Teacher to Male students	Encouragement	8	29 %
Female Teacher to Female Students		20	71 %
Female Teacher to Female Students	Criticizing	7	70 %
Female Teacher to Female Students		3	30 %
Female Teacher to Male students	Ignoring	4	27%
Female Teacher to Female Students		11	73%

Furthermore, the next result showed female teacher feedback toward male and female students. Regarding the use of feedback toward no or incorrect answer such as inform, prompt, encouragement, criticizing and ignoring, female teacher provided inform more frequent toward male students for 18 times (72%) than toward female students for 7 times (28%). Then, the teacher also provided prompt feedback more frequent toward male students for 15 times (68%) than toward female students for 7 times (32%). However, encouragement feedback provided more frequent toward female students for 20 times (71%) than toward male students for 8 times (29%). Furthermore, the teacher provided criticizing feedback more frequent toward male students for 7 times (30%) than toward female students for 3 times (30%). But, the teacher provided ignoring feedback much more toward female students for 11 times (73%) than toward male students for 4 times (27%).

In addition, in providing feedback toward correct answer the teacher provided acknowledgement more frequent toward male students for 38 times (66%) than female students for 20 times (34%). Also, the teacher provided comment more frequent toward male students for 5 times (56%) than female students for 4 times (44%). In this regard, the female teachers used feedback interaction differently to male and female students.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that female teacher provided feedback for 167 times. Moreover, the teacher tended to provide feedback much more toward male students for 95 times (57%). In this move, the teacher provided feedback with inform, prompt, criticizing, acknowledgement and comment more frequent. While, the teacher provided feedback toward female students for 72 times (43%) by providing encouragement and ignoring feedback more frequent. The following excerpts are the examples of feedback interaction.

Excerpt 1 (Inform)

FT "You have correctly answered both parts of the problem, showing me that you were able to interpret both the question and the explanation. Your method of creating tables is going to be right.

MS *Ok. Mam*

FT "I can see that you understood what Andy meant by doubling the height and width. Your diagram correctly shows what would happen if you doubled each side of the garden.

FS *Thanks Mam...*

Excerpt 2 (Prompt)

FT *Exceclent...*

MS *Thanks mam...*

FT *Good...*

FS *Thanks mam*

Excerpt 3 (Encouragement)

FT *It would be better to check your answer*

MS *Thank mam*

FT *It can be easier to compare this with your friends*

FS *Thank mam*

Excerpt 4 (Criticizing)

FT *This is good, but it will be better if you retouch this part.*

MS *Thank mam*

FT *Sorry, I must say your performance is not very good.*

FS *Thanks mam*

Excerpt 5 (Ignoring)

FT *Your performance is bad*

MS *Oh.....mam*

FT *I did not connect with the topic*

FS *Oh...thank you..*

Discussion

Based on the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that for the first result, it was found that female teacher initiated interaction toward male students by directing three types of initiation such as questioning, invitation and direction. Moreover, female teacher provided feedback by providing inform, prompt, encouragement, criticizing, ignoring, acknowledgement and comment. Furthermore, female teacher also initiated interaction toward female students by directing questioning, invitation and direction. Then, the teacher provided feedback toward female students by providing inform, prompt, encouragement, criticizing, ignoring, acknowledgement and comment.

For the second result, it was found that female teacher initiated interaction more frequent toward male students for 72 times (53%). Besides, female teacher tended to initiate interaction by directing questioning and direction more frequent. While female teacher initiated interaction toward female students in small frequent for 63 times (47%) and tended to initiate interaction by directing invitation more frequent.

Furthermore, female teacher provided feedback more frequent toward male students for 95 times (57%) that tended to provide inform, prompt, criticizing, acknowledgement and comment more frequent. Moreover, the teacher provided feedback toward female students in small frequent for 72 times (43%). While, female teacher tended to provide female students more frequent in two types of feedback such as encouragement and ignoring.

Based on the result of the study, the writer argues that the teacher tended to act the role toward male than female student. The teacher should give the opportunities to female students to be involved in teaching and learning process. Furthermore, the teachers should give the students opportunity to practice their language flexibly without interrupting their mistake if the students do the mistake. The interruption will get the student inconvenient to practice their English.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, the writer found that female teacher initiated interaction toward male and female students by directing questioning, invitation and direction. Moreover, female teacher provided feedback toward male and female students by providing inform, prompt, encouragement, criticizing, ignoring, acknowledgement and comment. Furthermore, female teacher initiated interaction more frequent toward male students for 72 times (53%) and tended to initiate interaction by directing two types of act such as questioning and direction more frequent. While, female teacher initiated interaction in small frequent for 63 times (47%) toward female students that tended to initiate interaction by directing invitation more frequent. Moreover, female teacher provided feedback more frequent toward male for 95 times (57%) and tended to provide feedback more frequent with inform, prompt, criticizing, acknowledgement

and comments. Then, the teacher provided feedback toward female students in small frequent for 72 times (43%) that tended to provide feedback more frequent with encouragement and ignoring.

In conclusion, the female teacher to male students tended to use direct questioning and initiation classroom interaction, However, female teacher to male students not was frequently used this interaction. In vice versa, in feedback interaction, the female teachers frequently used inform and prompt questions to the male students. Then, the female teachers to female students used encouragement feedback and ignoring feedback.

Suggestions and Recommendations

For the teachers, in the classroom interaction, the teacher should interact in the equal toward male and female students in order that male or female students get the same experience and opportunity to interact with their teacher. For the students, both male or female students have to involve in classroom interaction. Moreover, for female students must be active, courage and confident to respond teacher's initiation and male students must be more serious in leading teaching and learning process. So that, the interaction will be more pleasure when the classroom participants are support each other.

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