

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Good communication is always one of the most difficult skills to master and probably a great source of friction and problems in any organization. Situation, time, cultures and customs and gender styles affect and complicate communication. Having studied communication patterns for many years, linguists tend to agree upon gender differences, some of which may be a result of basic biological or genetic differences, and others a result of cultural behavioral expectations and training. No matter which theory is correct, gender differences in communication may pose problems in relating or interacting with one another.

All of us have different styles of communicating with other people. Our style depends on a lot of things: where we're from, how and where we were brought up, our educational background, our age, and it also can depend on our gender. Generally speaking, men and women talk differently although there are varying degrees of masculine and feminine speech characteristics in each of us. But men and women speak in particular ways mostly because those ways are associated with their gender. The styles that men and women use to communicate have been described as report and rapport type talk. Men often seek straightforward solutions to problems and useful advice whereas women tend to try and establish intimacy by discussing problems and showing concern and empathy in order to reinforce relationships.

Tannen (1990) states that male and female's brains are structured and process information differently. Men process information analytically while women tend to process things abstractly. Each gender has a distinctive communication pattern and often mistakenly assumes that the opposite gender thinks and acts as they do. This is where miscommunication arises because each side believes they are communicating clearly based on their own communication patterns but they are not.

Tannen (1990) distinguishes male and female communication patterns. According to her, the male communication pattern is considered "report" type talk, while female communication pattern is considered "rapport" type talk. Male use conversation as a means of establishing status and power, while female use conversation to make connections and establish intimacy and community. Conversation of male is more competitive, while conversation of female is more cooperative. Men focus on power and status, while women focus on feelings and building relationships. In problem solving, male take a straightforward approach, while female tend to establish intimacy, show concern and empathy. When thinking about the problem, male expect solutions, exerting power to accomplish the problem solving task. On the other hand, female use problem solving as a way to strengthen relationships, focusing on sharing and discussing the problem rather than the end result. Male displays a higher percentage of providing information, direction, or answers, and direct disagreement than female do. (Tannen, 1990).

Based on Tannen's theory about male and female communication patterns, this study focuses on communication patterns of male and female students in cooperative learning classroom. It is because in cooperative learning classroom, students work with classmates who have different learning skills, cultural background, attitudes, personalities, and gender (Slavin, 1995). Therefore, this study

is limited on the differences of gender communication patterns in cooperative learning classroom which is male students are considered have “report” type talk and female students are considered have “rapport” type talk. In this case, the researcher focuses on speech acts of male and female students in providing information, giving answers, giving agreement and disagreement. These speech acts are focused on male and female communication pattern namely “report” type talk and “rapport” type talk.

In the classroom, teachers control the amount of communication throughout the room. Teachers decide who talks, when they talk, and how to control the children when they are working together. The majority of the instruction that is delivered in classrooms is direct and teacher centered. Students are in competition for grades, praise, and recognition. An important aspect of learning is for students to be able to communicate what they know, or think they know. The best way for teachers to encourage communication from all students is through classroom discussion or small group work. One common teachers’ method used as a teaching strategy is the use of group learning. Group learning is also referred to as cooperative learning (Kagan, 1994). Ninety percent of human daily interactions involve working with others to a common goal. Cooperation is a non-conscious goal of interaction, socialization, and education (Tannen, 1994). Slavin (1990) and Johnson (1984) conducted many surveys and researches use cooperative learning method. They discovered that cooperative learning develops higher self-esteem, students learn effective ways to deal with peers, and they learn social skills like decision-making, trust building, communication, and conflict management. Through cooperative learning students learn several key skills to bring into the real world and they learn how to communicate with different genders.

Based on the writer's experience who teaches English in Junior High School students, gender has role in cooperative learning classroom. For example, girls tend to be able to plan and organize their work more effectively than boys. They are also more able to apply their skills to different learning contexts. Boys interrupt more frequently and answer more often, even when they do not know the answer. Girls talk less in class and in groups but they are more likely to ask for help. Boys tend to over-estimate their academic abilities. Girls generally under-estimate their abilities and work harder to compensate. Boys tend to act first and think later. Girls like to think before they act and they are more careful in doing tasks than boys.

The differences of communication of male and female students in cooperative learning classroom are also influenced by contextual factors and psychological factors. Boekaerts, De Koning, and Vedder (2006) state that there are two contextual factors that play important role in cooperative learning classroom. First is instructional characteristics, such as the type of task, the type of evaluation/rewards, teacher instruction behavior, and teachers' clarity on rules for cooperative learning. Second is social climate, including students' perceptions of the availability of teacher's academic and emotional support, and the availability of peer academic and emotional support. This study is limited on the first contextual factor namely instructional characteristics which is given in cooperative learning classroom to investigate the differences of male and female students communication. While in psychological factors, Yan Hua (2007) stated that there are three psychological factors that affect gender communication in classroom. They are shyness, confidence and motivation.

The researcher also found the reality of language use in gender communication pattern. It was found that girls and boys learn to use language

differently in their peer groups. Typically, a girl has a best friend with whom she sits and talks, frequently telling secrets. For boys, activities are central: their best friends are the ones they do things with. Boys also tend to play in larger groups that are hierarchical. So boys are expected to use language to exhibit their skill, display their knowledge and resist challenges. In cooperative learning classroom, boys spoke more frequently than girls. Boys tend to control topics of conversation and to interrupt girls. Girls tend to raise more questions and to give minimal responses to maintain harmonious exchanges. Boys talk more, contrary to what is commonly believed, and are more likely to use a vernacular style in private while girls use a standard and polite language. Based on the reality, the researcher is interested to make a research about communication patterns of male and female students in cooperative learning classroom.

In connection to the writer's experience, the researcher wants to investigate whether patterns of gender communication have role in cooperative learning classroom. In this case, the researcher focuses on how male and female students providing information, giving answers, giving agreement and disagreement in cooperative learning classroom. It is because in cooperative learning classroom, the writer found that many speech acts which are applied by students while they are discussing. So, the researcher limits the study on how male and female students providing information, giving answers, giving agreement and disagreement in the classroom. Besides, this study also focuses on how contextual factors and psychological factors play their role in male and female communication patterns in cooperative learning classroom. In this case, the researcher focuses on instructional characteristics

1.2 Problems of the Study

The problems of the study are formulated as the following:

- 1) What factors of psychological background affect male students communicate in “report” type talk when they are learning in Cooperative Learning Classroom atmosphere?
- 2) What factors of psychological background affect female students communicate in “rapport” type talk when they are learning in Cooperative Learning Classroom atmosphere?
- 3) How do contextual factors play their role in male and female communication patterns in Cooperative Learning Classroom?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

- 1) to investigate what factors of psychological background affect male students communicate in “report” type talk when they are learning in Cooperative Learning Classroom atmosphere,
- 2) to investigate what factors of psychological background affect female students communicate in “report” type talk when they are learning in Cooperative Learning Classroom atmosphere, and
- 3) to describe how contextual factors play their role in male and female communication patterns in Cooperative Learning Classroom

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study is limited on the patterns of communication with reference to gender in cooperative learning classroom. In this case, the classroom has been set by

applying cooperative learning and the communication of students are observed in the classroom by referring “report” type talk and “rapport” type talk. Tannen (1990) distinguishes male and female communication patterns. The male communication pattern is considered “report” type talk. The characteristics are male establish status and power, the conversation is more competitive, male focus on power and status. In problem solving, male take a straightforward approach, when thinking about the problem, male expect solutions, exerting power to accomplish the problem solving task and male display a higher percentage of providing information, direction, or answers, and direct disagreement than female do. On the other hand, Tannen (1990) states the female communication pattern is considered “rapport” type talk. The characteristics are female establish intimacy and community, the conversation is more cooperative, they focus on feelings and building relationships. In problem solving, female tend to establish intimacy, show concern and empathy, when thinking about the problem, female use problem solving as a way to strengthen relationships, focusing on sharing and discussing the problem rather than the end result and female display a lower percentage of providing information, direction, or answers, and direct disagreement than male do. This study is limited on speech acts of male and female students in providing information, giving answers, giving agreement and disagreement and it is limited on contextual factor namely instructional characteristics.

1.5 Significance of the Study

A study on patterns of communication to gender is a very interesting and challenging one to be conducted because it is one of many aspects of the language

being studied. It is expected that findings of this study are useful and relevant theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the findings of the study are potential:

1. to add up horizon in theory of language learning especially about gender communication in cooperative learning classroom,
2. to be references to further study which focuses on the differences of gender communication in cooperative learning classroom.

Practically, the findings of the study are relevant to:

1. English teachers, the study will be as the information to increase teaching-learning process in cooperative learning classroom especially for teachers who want investigate how male and female students communicate in cooperative learning classroom,
2. Students of English language, the study can be used as a reference to rise communication in cooperative learning classroom,
3. The English department, the findings can encourage and motivate the lecturers to increase their teaching in communication to increase students' English classroom interaction

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