

Complaining in EFL Learners: Differences of Realizations between Men and Women

(A case study of Indonesian EFL learners
at the English Department of the Indonesia University of Education)

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Abstrak: Berbagai kajian menunjukkan bahwa cara berbicara pria dan wanita berbeda. Wanita dianggap lebih sopan daripada pria. Berangkat dari fenomena itu, peneliti berusaha mengemukakan bukti-bukti dan penjelasan mengenai perilaku berbahasa wanita yang secara teori disebutkan lebih sopan daripada laki-laki dengan mengkaji fitur-fitur linguistik mereka, terutama dalam tindak tutur menyampaikan keluhan. Peneliti berusaha mengkaji perbedaan realisasi menyampaikan keluhan antara mahasiswa dan mahasiswi pemelajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing dengan melibatkan 20 mahasiswa pria dan 20 wanita. Data penelitian dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner terbuka dalam bentuk Discourse Completion Task (DCT) dan wawancara setengah terstruktur. Respon yang diberikan dianalisis berdasarkan strategi menyampaikan keluhan dari Trosborg (1994) dan taksonomi tindak tutur dari Rinnert dan Nogami (2006). Hasil analisis menunjukkan adanya perbedaan antara pria dan wanita di dalam menyampaikan tindak tutur keluhan. Pria merupakan pihak tertinggi dalam menggunakan tuduhan langsung, sedangkan wanita lebih banyak menggunakan tuduhan tidak langsung. Hasil analisis juga menunjukkan bahwa strategi menyampaikan keluhan lebih banyak digunakan oleh wanita daripada oleh pria. Jender juga terbukti berpengaruh atas pilihan strategi tindak tutur menyampaikan keluhan.

Keywords: tindak tutur mengeluh, jender, pemelajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing Indonesia, discourse completion task, realisasi mengeluh, tuduhan langsung.

Abstract: Various studies suggest that the way men and women speak is different. Women are considered to be more polite than men. Based on the phenomenon, the reserachers attempt to establish evidences and verification about women's linguistic behavior in which women are theoretically more polite than men by investigating the linguistic features between men and women's speech act of complaining. The present study investigates the differences of complaining realizations between Indonesian EFL men and women students involving 20 senior male and 20 female students. Data were collected through an open-ended questionnaire in the form of a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and a semi-structured interview. The responses were analyzed based on Trosborg's (1994) complaint strategies and Rinnert and Nogami's (2006) taxonomy of the speech act. The study reveals that there is a difference between men and women in proposing the complaining speech act. Men were the highest users of direct accusations while women used indirect accusations the most. The present study also found that the use of complaining strategies was more frequently employed by women than by men. Gender has been proven to have an influence on the choice of complaining strategies.

Keywords: complaining speech act, gender, Indonesian EFL learners, discourse completion task (DCT) complaining realizations, direct accusation.

In daily life, people frequently become annoyed, dissatisfied or unhappy about other people or circumstances. In fact, uncomfortable situations often trigger expressions of complaints. To show their reactions to the annoying events, express their feelings of dissatisfaction toward others, people choose certain words and behave depending on particular factors such as social status, gender, relationship between the interlocutors, and the complexity of situations. This study focuses on gender as the main focus to investigate the differences of the complaining speech acts' realizations between Indonesian EFL male and female learners. The researcher aimed to reveal how gender can influence people's speech. The speech act of complaining is identified by Searle (1969) as a category of expressive. According to Trosborg (1995), a complaint is, "an illocutionary act in which the speaker (the complainer) expresses his or her disapproval or other negative feelings towards the state of affairs described in the proposition (the complainable) and for which he or she holds the hearer (the complaine) responsible, either directly indirectly" (pp. 311-312).

This research intentionally focuses on the speech act of complaining because of the unique characteristics of this kind of speech that according to Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) involves the Face-Threatening Act and is considered as conflictive acts (Leech, 1983) that should be avoided because they show the negative feelings of the speaker (S) and tend to threaten the hearer (H). Conflictive means that by complaining, people create a conflict between the S and H while Face-Threatening Act means it tends to threaten the hearer (H). However, speech act of complaining has a vital function in constructing someone's improved behavior.

Language cannot be alienated with a society because language use is influenced by social structure. Wardhaugh (1992) asserts that social structure may either influence or determine linguistic structure and or behavior. Discussing language and society, which is part of sociolinguistics, falls into the area of 'language and gender' (Wardhaugh, 1992) as one of the characteristics that influence people's communication. Gender is a term used to describe

socially constructed categories based on sex. It asserts that gender has an effect to the speaker to choose what kind of style in language they will use. Language and gender focuses on the language characteristics used by men and women: how gender stereotyping works in their choice of language styles. In the present study, the researcher attempted to reveal the differences of language styles used by men and women when they are in annoying situations.

Numerous studies indicate that men and women typically employ different linguistic styles. They describe women's speech as being different from that of men. Women have been found to use certain patterns associated with surprise and politeness more often than men (Brend, 1975). Lakoff (1975) also declares in his study that women may answer a question with a statement that employs the rising intonation pattern associated with making a firm statement. It is because they are less sure about themselves and their opinions than men are. Lakoff is among the first to claim that women use more questions than men do. Keith and Suttleworth (p. 222) suggest that women's characteristics are more polite, indecisive or hesitant, complaining and nagging whereas men tend to swear, dominate conversation, and give more commands.

Moreover, there has been much research about the speech act of complaining; studies show that realization of complaints varies across speakers from one culture to another. Some examples are the studies conducted by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987), De Capua (1998), Trosborg (1994), Trenchs (1995), Moon (2001), Tanck (2002) and Farnia, Buchheit and Banu (2010). Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) investigate the speech act of complaining in Hebrew; De Capua (1998) observes the speech act of complaining between EFL learners in Germany and Native speakers; Trosborg (1994) compares aspects of discourse competence and sociolinguistic competence in Danish learners of English to native speakers of English; Trenchs (1995) study speech act of complaining in Catalan; Moon (2001) observes the differences of complaint strategies between Native and Non-Native Speakers in Korea; and

the later Tanck (2002) investigates the difference between native and non-native English speakers' production of refusal and complaint, whereas Farnia, Buchheit and Banu (2010) investigate the preferred strategies of the speech act of complaining by Malaysian ESL learners. In this study, the researchers attempt to establish evidences and verification about women's linguistic behavior in which women are theoretically more polite than men are and to discover more information about the characteristics of men and women by investigating the linguistic features between men and women's speech act.

METHODOLOGY

Forty senior students who were registered since 2006 or 2007 were selected from the English Department of the Indonesian University of Education. They were divided into 20 male and 20 female students chosen purposively. The respondents should have studied at least three or four years and were selected based on the assumption that they have both 'adequate' competences, in linguistic and communicative competences. The research employed questionnaires and interviews to collect data. The questionnaire was in the form of Discourse Completion Test (DCT) consisting of three scripted situations having different gender contexts. In every situation, there was a description about the social variable involved, followed by a blank space for respondents to fill in. Respondents were asked to write the oral response if they were in the situation. They were asked to write their responses as closely as possible to what they might actually say. In the data collection, the respondents were provided with a survey packet comprising of an Informed Consent Form, a Demographic Survey and a Discourse Completion Test (DCT). The realizations of complaining strategies in this study were analyzed by two theories. As the main theory, the present study uses the eight complaining strategies proposed by Trosborg (1994) and by Rinnert and Nogami (2006) that describe the taxonomy of complaint as the supporting device to this analysis. The eight

complaint strategies classified by Trosborg (1994) are hints, annoyance, ill consequences, indirect accusation, direct accusation, modified blame, explicit blame (behavior), and explicit blame (person). Whereas Rinnert and Nogami divide the classification of complaint into three aspects of complaint: main component (initiator, complaint, request), level of directness (indirect, somewhat direct, very direct), and amount of mitigating.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the description of the obtained data is firstly presented and then followed by the data analysis. Table 1.1 and 1.2 present the overall distribution of the complaining strategies performed by the respondents of the study based on Trosborg's theory. As the tables show, there are two kinds of ranks on each table: category-based rank and strategy-based rank. In men's table, with the total frequency of 120 the most frequently used category is *accusation*, which comprises 64.17 %, while the second one is *blame*, which occurs in (17.50%) of men's utterances. The third is no explicit reproach, which holds (10%) responses, and the last is expression of disapproval, which is found in 8,33%. Whereas in women's table, the most frequently used category is also *accusation*, which comprises 53.33%, and the second one is also *blame* which occurs in 25,67% in men's utterances. The third is no explicit reproach, which holds 13.33% and expression of disapproval 6.67%. In terms of strategy, in men's table with the total frequency of 120, the most often used strategy is direct accusation (40%), indirect accusation (24.17%), hints (10%) and the least used strategy is ill consequences (3.33%). In women's table, with the total frequency of 120, the most often used strategy is indirect accusation (32.50%), direct accusation (20.83%), hints (13.33%), and the least used strategy is ill consequences (1,67%). The category-based rank is not the focus of the present study because each category does not have an equal number of

complaining strategies. Thus, it will be unfair to claim that the occurrences of one category are more frequent than the others.

Table 1.1
Distribution of Men's Complaint Strategies based on Trosborg (1994)

Cat.	Strategy	Frequency	%	Rank
1	No explicit Reproach			
	Hints	12	10.00%	3
	Sub Total	12	10.00%	III
2	Expression of disapproval			
	Annoyance	6	5.00%	6
	ill consequences	4	3.33%	8
	Sub Total	10	8.33%	IV
3	Accusation			
	Indirect	29	24.17%	2
	Direct	48	40.00%	1
	Sub Total	77	64.17%	I
4	Blaming			
	Modified Blame	6	5.00%	7
	Explicit Blame (behavior)	8	6.67%	4
	Explicit Blame (person)	7	5.83%	5
	Sub Total	21	17.50%	II
	Total	120	100.00%	

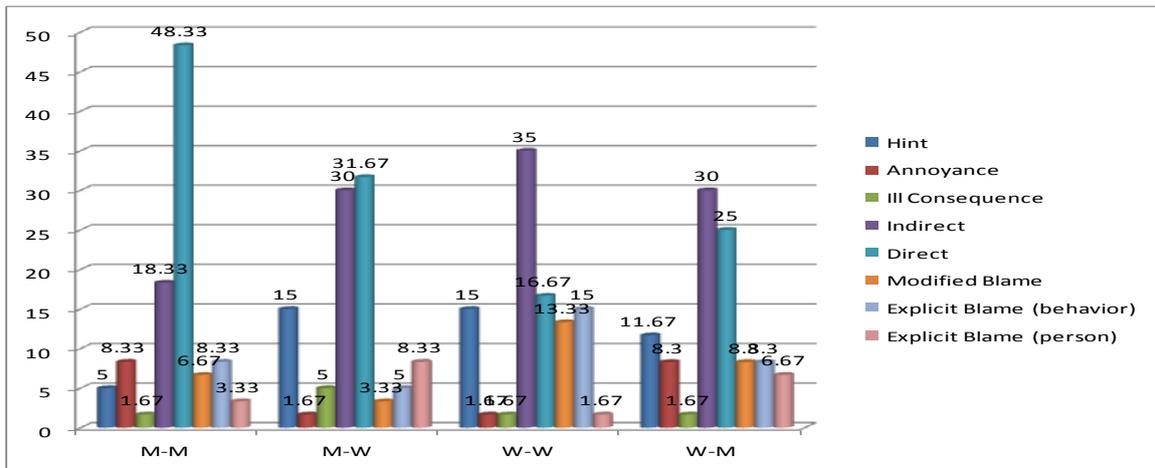
Table 1.2
Distribution of Women's Complaint Strategies based on Trosborg (1994)

Cat.	Strategy	Frequency	%	Rank
1	No explicit Reproach			
	Hints	16	13.33%	3
	Sub Total	16	13.33%	III
2	Expression of disapproval			
	Annoyance	6	5.00%	6
	ill consequences	2	1.67%	8
	Sub Total	8	6.67%	IV
3	Accusation			
	Indirect	39	32.50%	1
	Direct	25	20.83%	2
	Sub Total	64	53.33%	I
4	Blaming			
	Modified Blame	13	10.83%	5
	Explicit Blame (behavior)	14	11.67%	4
	Explicit Blame (person)	5	4.17%	7
	Sub Total	32	26.67%	II
	Total	120	100.00%	

Men and Women's Realizations of Speech Act of Complaining

This study aims to describe the comparison between Men and Women's complaining act, and in this section there will be a further description about the each complaint strategy proposed by each gender. To help with the explanation, a distribution chart for four distributions from each gender is shown as follows:

Distribution Chart for each Gender (%)
Figure 1

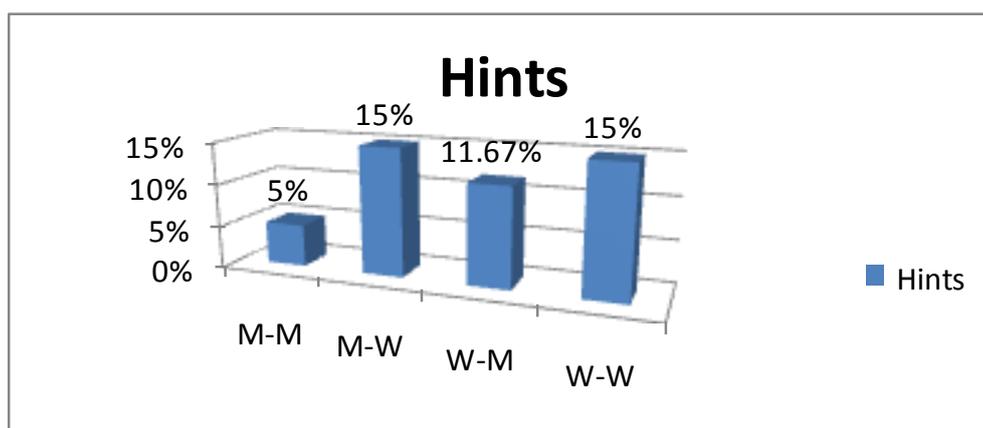


As the chart shows, when someone proposes a complaint, his or her decision to use kinds of complaining strategies is influenced by gender. It is proven by various strategies' distribution in the diagram. From the chart, direct accusation is the most frequently strategy used by men to put forward the complaining act. Men used 48.33% direct accusation to men and 31.67% to women. Beside direct, indirect accusation is also a favorite way for men to complain. It is shown by the second rank that 18.38% of men's utterances use indirect accusation to complain to men and 30% to women. It can be summarized that men choose a softer way when complaining to people of different gender. On the women's chart, there is an opposite result: women mostly use an indirect accusation (35%) when complaining to women and 30% when the complainees are men. The table also shows that 16.67% women use direct accusations when they complain to the same gender and 25% to a different one. The uncommon strategies are annoyances and ill consequences. The chart implies that expression of annoyance or disapproval is not commonly used by the respondents to complain, even if women to women. It is only 1.67% of women use annoyances and ill consequences in complaining to women. However, when women complain to men, annoyances strategies have more users, 8.3%.

1. Hints

Hint is also a preferred way for people to complain. Hint is the third position on the preferred complaining strategies. It is only men that propose a complaint to men that rarely use this strategy. Only 5% of men use hint as their complaint strategies, but, other groups use it as their common complaint strategies. It might be for politeness reasons. The present study found that Hints strategies are used by respondents only 15% on the highest occurrences. From the chart below, complaint from men to women (M-W) and women to women (W-W) has the same percentage. M-W and W-W use 15 % of hints as their complaint strategies to propose complaints. Other groups, men to men (M-M), use hints as complaint strategies only 5%, while women to men (W-M) use 11.67%. When a complainer uses a hint, he does not mention the complaints in a proposition to avoid a conflict with the complaine. The complainer implies that he knows about the offence, but holds the complaine indirectly responsible. The complainer does not state the complainable, therefore the complaine does not know whether an offence is referred to or not. That might cause a problem and Trosborg considers this strategy to be weak (1994).

Hints Distribution Chart
Figure 2



In the present study, the use of hinting strategy was found frequently in situation #3. See [4a] for example, Situation #3: Final Score. (Men to Women)

[4a] Complainer: Maam, I wonder why I got a C in your course. Can you tell me the reason why?

In [4a], the complainer implies that he knows about the complainable: there is a mistake with his final score. The complainer does not explicitly state his complaint and he does not directly hold the complaineer's responsibility for the problem. The complainer just proposes the question about the reason why he got a C. In this case, the use of hints is understandable considering the social status of the complainer. The complainer is a man and the complaineer is a woman. Men have more respect when they speak to women, and therefore, men to women have more frequently used hints than men to men. In addition, the complainer is a student while the complaineer is his lecturer. They are neither relative nor close friends, so they have a distance, with a student having lower power than a lecturer does. When pursuing a complaint, the complainer considers the social background of the complaineer who is older and more experienced than he is. Because of all the above reasons, the complainer uses a hinting strategy in terms of politeness complaint and avoidance of breaking their relationship.

As a mitigating device, the complainer uses "Maam..." to initiate the complaineer and asked, "Can you tell me the reason why?" for a request of repair.

Another example is [4b], in situation #2 (Women to Women)

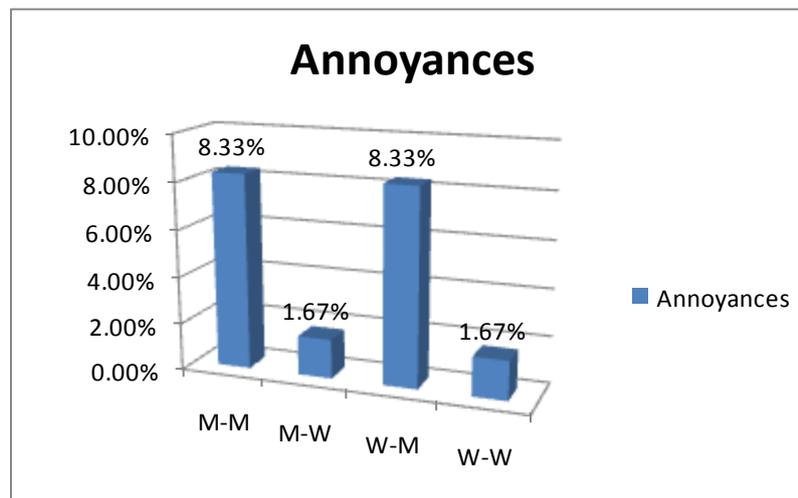
[4b] Complainer: "I need sleep, hope you understand."

In [4b], the complainer implies that she knows about the complainable: there was a noisy situation here. The complainer does not explicitly state her complaint and she does not directly hold the complaineer's responsibility for the problem. The complainer just proposes the statement about what she needs and just says, "Hope you understand" at the end of her statement. In this case, the use of the hint is also understandable, considering the social status and gender similarity of the complainer. When women speak, they tend to consider their

interlocutor's feelings, even if their interlocutors are also women. Therefore, direct judgments are avoided in their conversation by using hints.

2. Annoyances

Annoyances' Distribution Chart
Figure 2



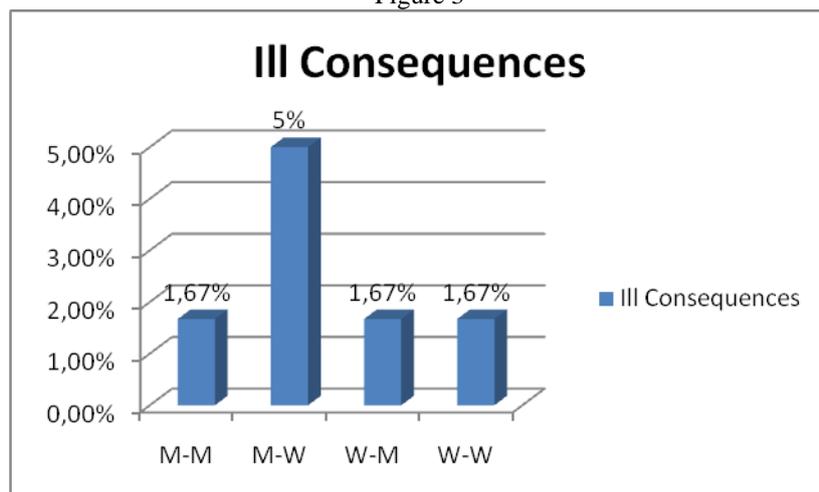
The present study shows that annoyance strategies are used by the respondents only 8.33% on the highest occurrences. From the chart, men to men (M-M) and women to men (W-M) have the same percentage. M-M and W-M use 8.33% annoyances as their complaint strategies. Other groups, men to women (M-W) and women to women (W-W) also have the same percentage. They use annoyances complaint strategies only 1.67%. When a complainer uses annoyances, he or she expresses his or her annoyance by stating the situation that is considered to be bad for him or her. The complainer implies that he or she holds the complainees' responsibility but avoids mentioning the complainees as the guilty person. In the present study, the use of annoyance strategy is found frequently in situation #2. See [4c] for example, Situation #2: Noisy Night. (Women to Men)

[4c] Complainer: "It's very annoyed to hear a lot of noise every night. So, can you make it better?"

In [4c], the complainer expresses her annoyance by saying “It’s very annoyed to hear a lot of noise every night.” The complainer explicitly states her complaint but he does not directly hold the complaineer’s responsibility for the problem. The complainer just states the annoying situation and proposes the request about making a better condition. The complainer does not directly mention the person as a complaineer to avoid the guilty party. The use of annoyances is understandable because the complainer is a woman, while the complaineer is a man. Women use more feelings when they speak and more likely to consider their interlocutor’s feelings. Women use annoyances as their strategies to avoid the complaineer as the guilty party, but this study finds that this strategy is not preferred by the respondents as only 8.3% of the respondents chose this strategy. As a mitigating device, the complainer states a request for repair, “Can you make it better?” that supports the previous statement. The complainer does not mention directly the complaineer, but she only states the annoying situation and then makes a request to complaineer to repair the condition.

3. Ill Consequences

Ill Consequences’ Distribution Chart
Figure 3



The present study reveals that ill consequences strategies are used by the respondents only 5% on the highest occurrences. From the chart, men to women (M-W) use ill

consequences as their complaint strategies to propose the complaint. Other groups, men to men (M-M), women to men (W-M) and women to women (W-W) have the same percentage. They use ill consequences complaint strategies only 1.67%. Ill consequences are the most uncommonly preferred strategies used by the respondents. Only 5 % of the respondents use this strategy. The same as annoyances, when a complainer uses ill consequences, he or she expresses his or her annoyance by stating the situation that is considered to be bad for him or her. The complainer implies that he or she holds the complainees responsibility but avoids mentioning the complainees as the guilty person. The difference is that the complainer states the utterances to express the ill consequences resulting from the offence for which the complainees is held implicitly responsible. The use of ill consequence strategy is found frequently in situation #1. See [4d] for example, Situation #1: Broken Camera. (men to women)

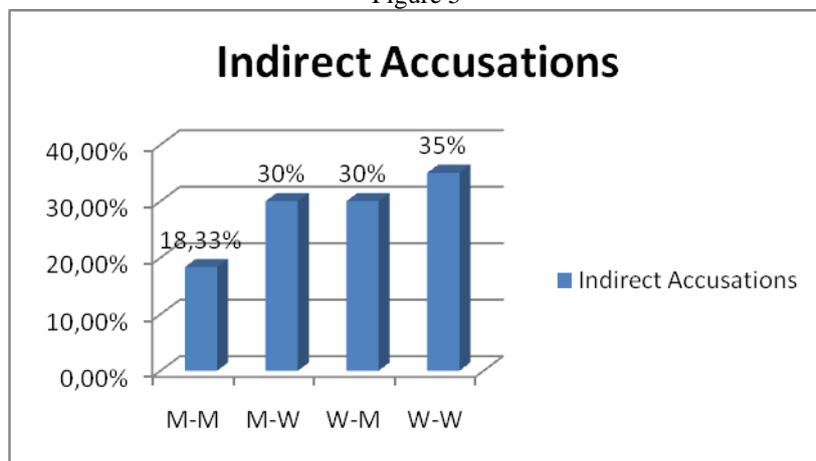
[4d] Complainer: Hello, why I can't use my camera again? What have you done with my camera? Okay, right now, I will not borrow [lend] it for you.

In [4d], the complainer expresses his ill consequence by saying, "why I can't use my camera again?" The complainer explicitly states her complaint, but he does not directly hold the complainees' responsibility for the problem. The complainer merely states the annoying situation by asking the question about the camera. The complainer asks why he cannot use the camera again as the ill consequences. However, the complainer does not mention the complainees directly to avoid the guilty party. In this case, the use of ill consequence is understandable, considering the gender of the complainer. The complainer is a man and the complainees is a woman. Men do more respect when speaking to women and consider the women's feelings. Therefore, men used ill consequences as their strategies to avoid the complainees as the guilty party, but this study indicates that this strategy is not preferred by respondents. Only 5% of the respondents chose this strategy, because the result of

complaining act is considered as not effective to get the complainees response. As a mitigating device, the complainer states the mitigating device by using “hellow...” and followed by asking the ill condition. In this situation, the complainer does more directly complaint by using a little threat by states “I will not borrow [lend] it for you”. It can be considered to be an effort to support the complaining act on the previous statement.

4. Indirect Accusation

Indirect Accusation's Distribution Chart
Figure 5



The present study found that indirect accusations strategies are used by respondents 35% on the highest occurrences. From the chart, women to women (W-W) has the most frequent occurrences, while men to men (M-M) is in the opposite with only 18,33%. Other groups, men to women (M-W) and women to men (W-M) have the same percentage in the middle. It is indicated that 30% respondents use indirect accusations as their complaint strategies. In the distribution chart, indirect accusation is the most preferred strategy used by the respondents in four groups. Accusations are divided into two ways: indirect and direct accusation and both of them try to establish the agent of a complainable. By an indirect accusation, the complainer asks the hearer's questions about the situation or asserts that he or she was in some way connected with the offence. However, Trosborg argues that the use of

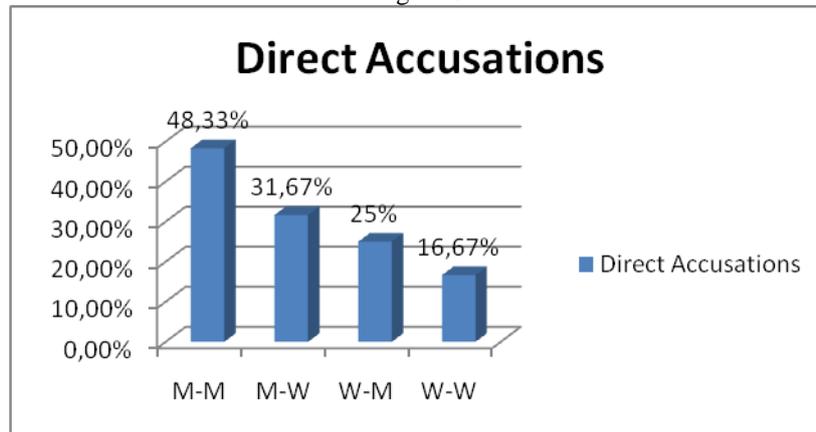
questioning or a piece of information is less face threatening (Trosborg 1994). In the present study, the use of indirect accusation strategy is found frequently in situation #3. See [4e] for example, Situation #1: Final Score. (Men to Men)

[4e] Complainer: Excuse me Sir, I just want to ask you about my score? Why I got C while on the final test an A?

In [4e], the complainer expresses an indirect accusation by saying “I just want to ask you about my score? Why I got a C while on the final test an A?” The complainer explicitly states his complaint by asking the situation about the grade. The complainer does not state the person as the agent, but he refers to the situation, which is called an indirect accusation. The use of indirect accusation is understandable from the perspective of the social status of the complainer. The complainer and complainees are men, and the usual stereotype is that men do more direct to men, but here the social status has more influence on this situation. The complainer is a student while the complainees are his lecturers. They are neither relatives nor close friends, so they have a distance. Moreover, a student has lower power than a lecturer does. When he pursues the complaint, the complainer considers the social background of the complainees who are older and more experienced than he is. Consequently, the complainer uses an indirect accusation strategy in terms of complaint politeness and avoidance of breaking their relationship. Therefore, an indirect accusation is the most uncommonly preferred strategies compared with the other three groups because it is not appropriate with the stereotype of a men’s speech act. Men commonly put forward their feelings freely, but in this situation, they should reduce the directness with an indirect accusation strategy because of power relations. The complainer states the mitigating device by using “Excuse me Sir,” and then by asking about the situation.

5. Direct Accusation

Direct Accusations' Distribution Chart
Figure 6



The present study found that indirect accusations strategies are used by respondents (48%) on the highest occurrences. From the chart, men to men (M-M) has the most frequent occurrences while in the opposite, women to women (W-W) use only 16.67%. Other groups, men to women (M-W) has 31.67% and women to men (W-M) has 25%. On the distribution chart, direct accusations falls into the second rank for the most preferred strategy used by respondents in four groups. As mentioned earlier, both direct and indirect accusations try to establish the agent of a complainable. This chart describes direct accusation as the second preferred strategies used by the respondents. By a direct accusation, the complainer directly accuses the complaine of having committed the offence. In the present study, the use of a indirect accusation strategy is found frequently in all situations, except in situation #3 (Women to Women). See examples in [4f], [4g], [4h]:

[4f] Situation #1: Broken Camera. (Men to Men)

Complainer: What did you do with my camera? You have to explain about this to mother and ask her to buy the new one to change this.

[4g] Situation #2: Noisy Night. (Men to Men)

Complainer: Would you shut up?!!

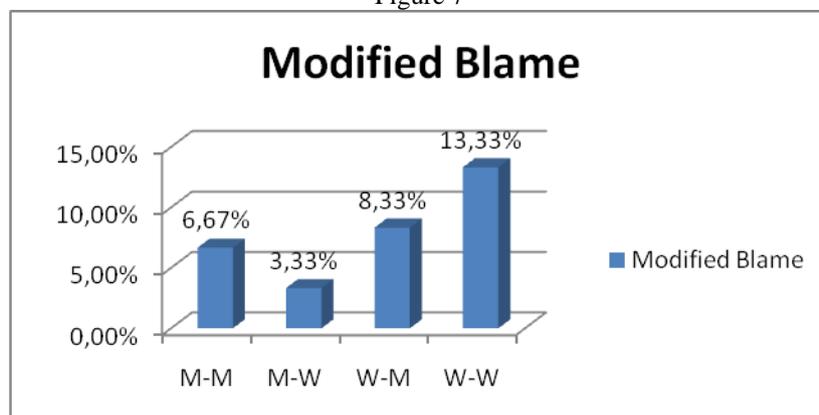
[4h] Situation #3: Final Score. (Men to Men)

Complainer: Excuse me Sir, may I interrupt your time? It's just for a few seconds. I just want to ask about my final grade, Sir, I've got A on my report but why did I get C at the end. Give me some explanations, Sir. So I know my faults and make a change here.

In these examples, the complainers directly state to the agents of the complainable and make the complainees the guilty party by explaining the situation. In 4[f], the complainer directly asks the hearer to shut his voice. By this direct statement, the hearer would become a guilty party and he is supposed to repair the condition. As for the last, [4h], the complainer states the directness by explaining the situation and asks the hearer for further information about the score. In this part, it is shown that there are various ways for the complainers to state direct accusations, however, the point that should be underlined is that the agent of complainables should be stated directly to make the hearer the guilty party. Mitigating devices were found in situation #3 to maintain relationship between the student and the lecturer. It is evident in this situation that power relations have more influence on complaining acts.

6. Modified Blame

Modified Blame's Distribution Chart
Figure 7



The present study shows that modified blame strategies are used by respondents only 13.33% on the highest occurrences. From the chart, women to women (W-W) has the most frequency in 13.33% while the opposite is in men to women (3.33%). As for the other groups, men to men (M-M) used modified blame complaint strategies only 6.67% while women to men (w-m) used 8.33%. By using a modified blame, a complainer expresses a modified disapproval of an action for which the accused is responsible, or the complainer states a preference for an alternative approach not taken by the accused. It presupposes that the accused is guilty of the offence, although this is not expressed explicitly. See [4i] as an example:

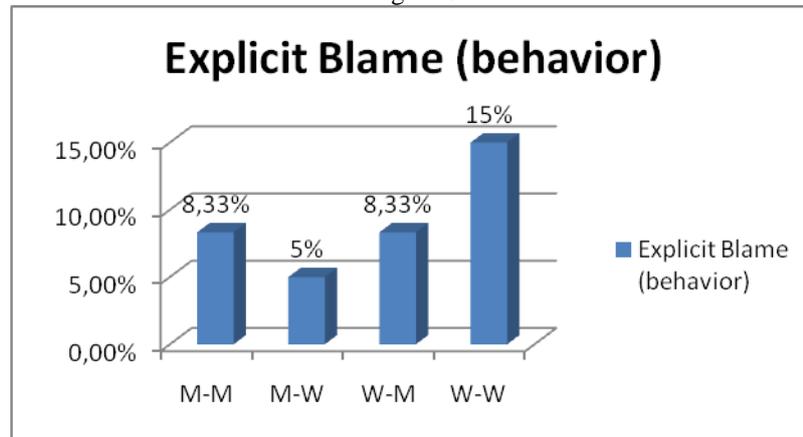
Situation #2: Noisy Night. (Women to Women)

[4i] Complainer: Gosh, it's so noisy... I'm very sleepy I need to go to bed. Can you at least be quite a little bit?

In this utterance, the complainer cannot sleep well because of the noise, so she expresses the complaint by saying "Gosh, it's so noisy..." and she explains that she should go to bed by "I'm very sleepy I need to go to bed." then followed by a modified blame by proposing "Can you at least be quite a little bit?" In this case, the dominant use of the modified blame is between women to women (W-W) and in situation #2 where the complainer and the complainees have an equal social distance and power. The modified blame might be used because the complainer and complainees are both women. Women speak more freely to the same gender and even in the same distance and power. The use of the modified blame is acceptable because it is indirect and considered as the softest way between the two blaming strategies.

7. *Explicit Blame (Behavior)*

Explicit Blame (behavior)'s Distribution Chart
Figure 8



The present study indicates that explicit blame (behavior) strategies are used by 15% of the respondents on the highest occurrences. From the chart, women to women (W-W) has the biggest frequency of 15% while the opposite is men to women (M-W) with 5%. In other groups, men to men (M-M) and women to men (W-M) have the same percentage (8.33%). By using an explicit blame (behavior), a complainer clearly states the action that the complainees has to take responsibility of. The use of this strategy frequently happens in situation #2. See [4j] as an example:

Situation #2: Noisy Night. (Women to Women)

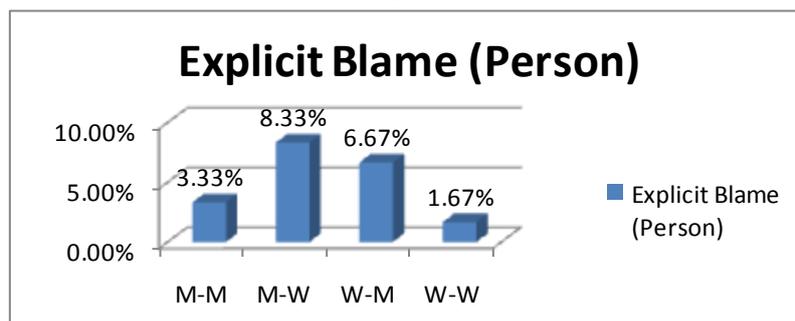
[4i] Complainer: I understand that you might have something to do that makes you have to come home very late. But, since this is really late night, and people are going to bed already, I think it's better for you to not make any distracting noise while you are coming home. I think this is good for you since people here are so uncomfortable with your behavior recently. So, could you please to be careful next time?

The unique characteristic of an explicit blame (behavior) is the explanation that the action is bad. It is sometimes considered to be softer than a modified blame. In this utterance, the complainer cannot sleep well because of the noise, so she states the complaint by advising the complainable, and the complainer uses the question in the last by asking "So, could you

please to be careful next time?” as a request for repair. The data also show that the dominant use of an explicit blame (behavior) is also between women to women (W-W) and in the situation #2 that has an equal social distance and power, which is derived from the social status of the complainer. Both the complainer and complaineer are both women and women have more freedom to converse with other women and even in the same distance and power. The use of an explicit blame (behavior) is acceptable because an indirect blame is considered as not too straight, but referring more to advising. A general women’s stereotype is that they love to give advice to others, especially to women as the same gender involving sharing on the same understanding.

8. *Explicit Blame (Person)*

Explicit Blame (Person)'s Distribution Chart
Figure 9



The present study found that explicit blame (person) strategies are used by 8.33% of the respondents on the highest occurrences. From the chart, there is a unique fact that the respondents prefer to use this strategy to complain to a different gender and it is not commonly used to the same gender. The chart shows that men to women (M-W) has the highest rank by 8.33% and women to men (W-M) in the second one by 6,67%. men to men (M-M) is in the third rank by 3,33% of the respondents, while women to women (W-W) has the least rank of 1,67%. These percentages appear to be related to tendency that people typically prefer using direct complaints to a different gender to stating to the same gender. By

an explicit blame (person), a complainer explicitly states the blaming to the person. The use of this strategy frequently happens in situation #1. See [4k] as an example.

Situation #1: Broken Camera. (Men to Men)

[4i] Complainer: Hey you, ugly-looking son of a bitch!!! This camera won't be fixed by just you say "sorry" and then watch TV. Go and fix it!

In this utterance, the complainer utters directly to the complaine, requiring that the accused person is considered to be a non-responsible social member. In this situation, the complainer states "Hey you, ugly-looking son of a bitch!!!" to initiate the complaine and it is definitely as a sarcastic utterance. Then, he continues by stating "This camera won't be fixed by just you say "sorry" and then watch TV. Go and fix it!" as the complaining act. This strategy is frequently found in situation #1 and usually relates to men, both to men or by men because for men directness is the norm in speaking. They put forward their thoughts first and then they think. Therefore, men are sometimes considered to be sarcastic speakers.

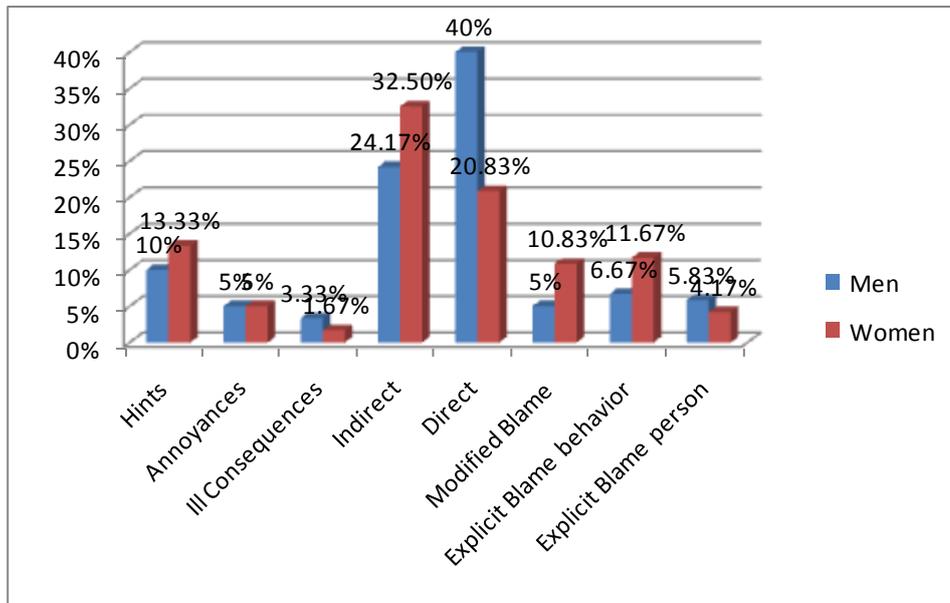
Style Differences between Men and Women in Complaining Acts

This present study aims to reveal the differences of the two gendered-groups by using a gender perspective. The chart below shows the overall distribution between men and women using complaint strategies proposed by Trosborg (1994). In the overall distribution, men are the only ones that more frequently use direct accusations than women do, while it is evident that women use the complaining strategy more than men. Men are the highest users of direct accusations because for men speaking straightforward is appreciated. Men tend to speak directly to the person and hope their speaking can make a better condition in the future. Therefore, direct accusations are chosen as the best way for them to convey their complaining. Focusing on the agent of a complainable as the main purpose of a direct

accusation is suitable for the Men's intention to mention the person as the guilty party and then to make restoration of the condition as soon as possible.

Distribution Chart between Men and Women

Figure 10



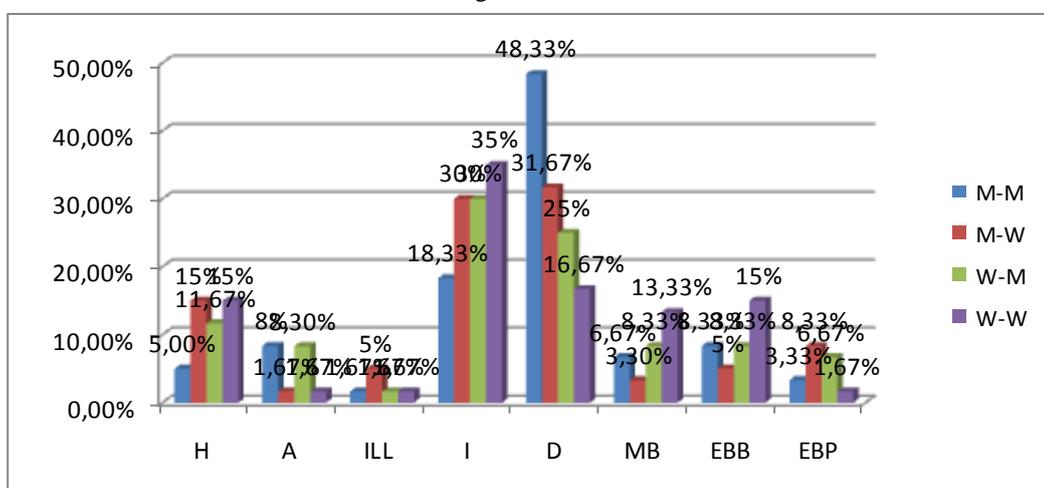
As the chart shows, women are the most users of indirect complaints as women tend to avoid breaking relationships. Women tries to maintain a good and harmonious relationship with other people. Using indirect accusations is also acceptable because another women's characteristic is that they are more likely to use their feelings. Women tend to think about the result of their speaking, especially for them and their interlocutors. The characteristics of indirect accusations that embody a softer way than direct accusations and that have the same point in conveying a complaint are seen as appropriate ways as the best complaining strategies. The use of complaining strategies by women is more frequent in almost all strategies than by men. It is commonsensical because women apparently love complaining. Boxer (1996) states that complaining is discussed as a positive interaction among women (for instance, complaining to communicate solidarity or empathy with another's problems);

women are still perceived as complaining more than men (Boxer, 1996). The fact that women are higher users of blaming strategies can be counted as supporting evidence to this theory.

Another theory that supports this fact is that women are prone to use the standard style of speech in the community compared to men (Eisikovits, 1987). Thus, it makes sense why women tend to complain more than men. They can perform the language use depending on the situation. Although they should learn to be polite, they can adopt the other ways of language use from other groups with regard to the purpose of the speech act. Complaining should be taken to improve the condition and blaming is considered to be the standard strategy in complaining. The directness of men in complaining is also considered by Milroy's theory (1980) saying that the social networks have an effect of men and women in the use of language. He assumes that men adopt the language characteristics of the groups with which they work as an expression of solidarity. In the men's group, it is familiar to speak straightforward proven in the way they complain. Thus, men use direct accusations as their preferred complaining strategies.

In this study, respondents are divided into four groups: men to men (M-M), men to women (M-W), women to men (W-M), and women to women (W-W). Here are the distribution charts of each group.

Distribution Chart of Each Group. (Trosborg, 1994)
Figure 11



The description of each group by Trosborg is improved by the distribution chart of each group by Rinnert and Nogami, 2006. It shows the taxonomy of complaining strategies so that it has a more comprehensive analysis.

Distribution Chart of Each Group. (Rinnert and Nogami,2006)
Figure 12



The first description is about Men: men to men (M-M) and men to women (M-W). The Trosborg's chart shows that M-M is more direct than M-W. It is related to the previous explanation that describes men who tend to be more direct than women. Related to the complaine, M-M has more users in direct accusations than in the M-W and it is acceptable because of a general gender characteristic that states that people speak more freely to the same gender than to a different one. When discussing women's characteristics based on the chart, it is shown that W-W uses more hints strategies than W-M. It is commonsensical because women are encouraged to make a good relationship with others and do not want to disturb their relationship, especially with the same gender.

In the case of directness, women are more direct in complaining to men rather than to women because of the agent of complainables and feelings of the initiator. The fact that men are considered to have stronger feelings than women is the reason why women more directly complain to men rather than to women. The focus here is the agent of complainables, which

is how the complainees know the purpose of proposing the complaining act itself. In blaming strategies, women are more explicit to men than to the same gender. However, on the overall blaming distribution, women use soft blaming as their preferred blaming strategies because they love complaints but still in the path that avoids disturbing the relationship. Therefore, the use of soft blaming is the best way in complaining for women. In describing the taxonomy based on Rinnert and Nogami, initiator and mitigating devices are more often used by women rather than men. It is tolerable by looking at Jespersen's theory (1922, pp. 237-254), claiming that women's construction language reflects a more standard version of language than that typically used by men. It is acceptable that women use the subject in the speech as the initiator of complaining.

CONCLUSIONS

The research is designed to investigate the speech act differences between men and women, especially when they were confronted with complaint situations that force them to convey complaints. Based on evidences that have been explained in the previous section, it is concluded that EFL learners realized the speech act of complaining in eight complaint strategies: hints, annoyances, ill consequences, indirect accusation, direct accusation, modified blame, explicit blame (behavior), and explicit blame (person). The most frequently used strategy was accusation. There is a different way between men and women in employing the complaining act. Men use direct accusations as their major strategy while women use indirect ones. Regarding the Gender, the use of complaining strategies is influenced by the gender of the complainer and complainees. Men to men (M-M) interaction is more direct than that of men to women (M-W). It is supported by M-M interaction which has more users in direct accusations than in the M-W. Women to Women (W-W) group use more hints strategies than the women to men (W-M) group. Women tend to be more direct in

complaining to men rather than to women. However, in blaming strategies, women tend to be more explicit to men than to the same gender. However, in the overall blaming distribution, women tend to use soft blaming as their preferred blaming strategies.

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