COMPLAINING IN EFL LEARNERS: DIFFERENCES OF REALIZATIONS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

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

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Abstrak

Makalah ini meneliti perbedaan realisasi dari aksi complain oleh pembelajar Inggris wanita dan pria. Responden terdiri dari 20 mahasiswa kelas lanjut di Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. Data dikumpulkan lewat kuestioner terbuka dalam bentuk Discourse Completion Task dan interview semi terstruktur. Jawaban mereka dianlisis berdasarkan strategi complain Trosborg (1994) didukung oleh taksonomi tindak ujaran dari Rinnert dan Nagami (2006). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pria menggunakan Direct Accusation lebih banyak. Penggunaan strategi complain dilakukan lebih banyak oleh wanita dari pada pria. Gender sebagai focus utama penelitian itu terbukti memiliki pengaruh pada pilihan strategi.

Keywords : complaining speech act, gender, Indonesian EFL learners

1. INTRODUCTION

In daily life, people frequently become annoyed, dissatisfied or unhappy about other people or circumstances. In fact, uncomfortable situations often trigger expressions of complaints. The ways people show their reactions to the annoying events, express their feelings of dissatisfaction toward others, make certain word choices and behave depending on particular factors. Social status, gender, relationship between the interlocutors, and the complexity of situations are the social variables that influence the speech strategies of speakers. This study focuses on gender as the main analyzer 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 complainee) 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) involve the Face-Threatening Act and considered as conflictive acts (Leech, 1983) that should be avoided because they show the negative feelings of the speaker (S) and tend to threat 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 threat 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) asserted 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 influences 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 have described 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 as cited in Michael [et al], 2010). 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 used more questions than men did. Keith and Suttleworth, as cited in Boxer 1993 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 which were conducted by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987), De Capua (1989), Trosborg (1994), Trenchs (1995), Moon (2001), Tanck (2003) and the later are Farnia, Buchheit and Banu (2010). Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) investigated the speech act of complaining in Hebrew; De Capua (1989) observed the speech act of complaining between EFL learners in Germany and Native speakers; Trosborg (1994) compared aspects of discourse competence and sociolinguistic competence in Danish learners of English to native speakers of English; Trenchs (1995) studied speech act of complaining in Catalan; Moon (2001) observed the differences of complaint

strategies between Native and Non-Native Speakers in Korea; and the later Tanck (2003) investigated the differences between native and non-native English speakers' production of refusal and complaint, whereas Farnia, Buchheit and Banu (2010) investigated the preferred strategies of the speech act of complaining by Malaysian ESL learners.

In this study, the researcher attempted 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. This research was guided by the following specific questions: what are the realizations of complaining between Indonesian EFL male and female learners and what aspects of gender aspects affect the differences of complaining act between Indonesian EFL male and female learners?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Data Collections: *Participants*

Participants were selected from the English Department of the Indonesian University of Education. The subjects for this investigation were 40 advanced students who were registered since 2006 or 2007. The 40 students were divided into 20 male and 20 female students.

The respondents were chosen based on purposive sampling. In this research, the samples should have studied at least three or four years in the English Department of the Indonesian University of Education. They were selected based on the assumption that they have both 'adequate' competences, in linguistic and communicative competences.

2.2. *Instruments and procedures*

The research employed questionnaires and interviews to collect data. The questionnaire was in the form of Discourse Completion Test (DCT). It consisted of three scripted situations that had different gender contexts. In every situation, there was a description about the social variable involved. Afterward, there was a blank space for respondents to fill in. Respondents were asked to write the oral response if they were in the situation. They were encouraged to response quickly so they would not carefully analyze what they thought their response should be. They weree asked to write their responses as closely as possible to what they might actually say.

Subjects were asked to participate in the study in person by the researcher. The subjects were provided with a survey packet comprised of an Informed Consent Form (Appendix A), a Demographic Survey (Appendix B) and a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) (Appendix C). The Informed Consent form provided informations about the research and researcher. In the written Demographic Survey, subjects were asked to provide basic information such as gender, age, course of the study, first language, as well as more specific information considering the subjects were non-native speakers. Specific information elicited including English learning environments, length of the formal English study, frequency and context of English use, self-determination of English

fluency and total time spent in English-speaking country (if any). Lastly, subjects completed the DCT.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

The realizations of complaining strategies in this study were analyzed by two theories. As the main theory, this present study used 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 proposed 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.

3.1. *Result and Discussions*

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.

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

Cat.	Strategy	Frequency	Percentage	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	Percentage	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%	

As the tables show, there are two kinds of ranks on each table: category-based rank and strategy-based rank.

In Men's table, the most frequently used category is Accusation, which comprises 77 of 120 responses (64.17 %). The second one is Blame, which occurs in 21 of 120 Men's utterances (17.50%). The third is No Explicit Reproach, which holds 12 of 120 responses (10%) and the last is Expression of Disapproval, which is found in 10 of 120 utterances (8.33%). Whereas in Women's table, the most frequently used category is also Accusation, which comprises 64 of 120 responses (53.33%). The second one is Blame, which occurs in 32 of 120 Men's utterances, (26.67%). The third is No Explicit Reproach, which holds 16 of 120 responses (13.33%) and the last is Expression of Disapproval, which has been found in 8 of 120 utterances (6.67%)

In terms of strategy, in Men's table, the most often used strategy is Direct Accusation, with a rate of occurrence 48 of 120 utterances (40%). The second rank is occupied by Indirect Accusation, with the occurrences 29 of 120 utterances (24.17%). The third is Hints, with a frequency 12 of 120 utterances (10%). The least used strategy is Ill Consequences, with a rate 4 of 120 utterances (3.33%).

In Women's table, the most often used strategy is Indirect Accusation, with a rate of occurrence 39 of 120 utterances (32.50%). The second rank is occupied by Direct Accusation, with the occurrences 25 of 120 utterances (20.83%). The third is Hints, with frequency 16 of 120 utterances (13.33%). The least used strategy is Ill Consequences, with a rate 2 of 120 utterances (1,67%).

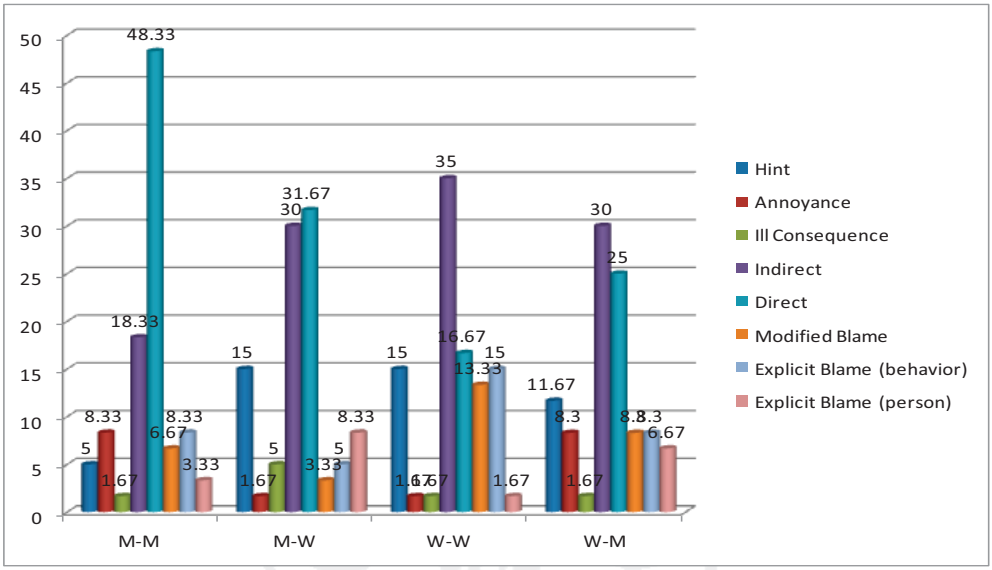
The category-based rank is not the focus of the present study because each category does not have an equal number of complaining strategies. Thus, it will be unfair to claim that the occurrences of one category are more frequent than the others.

3.2. Men and Women's Realizations of Speech Act of Complaining

This research aims to describe the comparison between Men and Women's complaining act, therefore 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, gender has an influence on people's decision to use kinds of complaining strategies. It is proven by various strategies' distribution on the diagram.

From the chart, Direct Accusation is the most frequently strategy that is 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 also used indirect accusation to complaint to men and 30% to Women. It can be summarized that men chose a softer way to complain if they want to complain to a different gender.

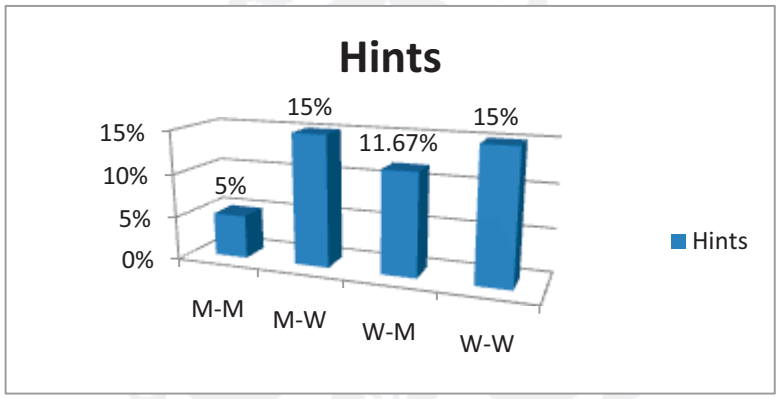
On the women's chart, there is an opposite result: women used an Indirect Accusation the most. Women used 35% indirect accusations when they propose a complaint to women and 30% while the complainee is men. Direct Accusations is in the second rank as the favorite complaint strategies. The table also shows the 16.67% women used 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 shows the annoyances and ill consequences are the least rank complaint strategies. It 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 used annoyances and ill consequences in complaining to women. However, when women complained to men, annoyances strategies have more users, 8.3% women used annoyances.

Hint is also a preferred way for people to complain. It is proven by the ranks of the chart. Hint is the third position on the preferred complaining strategies. It is only men that proposed a complaint to men that rarely used this strategy. Only 5% of men used Hint as their complaint strategies. However, other groups used Hint as their common complaint strategies. It might be for politeness reasons.

3.2.1. Hints

Hints Distribution Chart
Figure 2



The present study found that Hints strategies were used by respondents only 15% on the highest occurrences. From the chart, Men to Women (M-W) and Women to Women (W-W) have the same percentage. M-W and W-W used 15 % of Hints as their complaint strategies to propose complaints. Other groups, Men to Men (M-M) used Hints complaint strategies only 5%, while Women to Men (W-M) used 11.67%.

When a complainer uses a Hint, he does not mention the complainable in a proposition. It is caused by avoidance of a conflict with the complainee. The complainer implies that he knows about the offence, but holds the complainee indirectly responsible. The complainer does not state the complainable, therefore the complainee 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). 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 was a mistake with his final score. The complainer does not explicitly state his complaint and he does not directly hold the complainee'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 complainee is a woman. According to the common gender construct, men have more respect when they speak to women. Therefore, it is understandable that Men to Women have more frequently used Hints than Men to Men.

In addition, the complainer is a student while the complainee is his lecturer. They are neither relative nor close friends, so they have a distance. Moreover, a student has lower power than a lecturer does. Whereas, when he pursues the complaint, the complainer considers the social background of the complainee who is older and more experienced than he is. Because of all the above reasons, the complainer used a hinting strategy in terms of politeness complaint and avoidance of breaking their relationship. However, the social variables: Power, Imposition and Distance are not deeply analyzed because this study focuses on the gender variable.

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

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

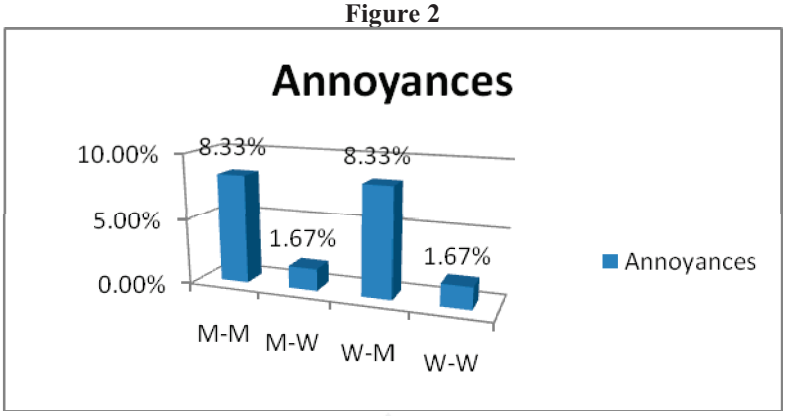
[4b] Complainer: "I need sleep, hope you understand."

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 complainee's responsibility for the problem. The complainer just proposes the statement about what she needs and just says, "Hope you understand" as the end of her statement.

In this case, the use of the Hint is also understandable, considering the social status of the complainer. The complainer and complainee are Women. According to the gender construct, when Women speak, they tend to consider their interlocutor's feelings, even if their interlocutors are also women. Therefore, the direct judgments are avoided in their conversation. Therefore, it is understandable that Women to Women use more frequent Hint strategies than Women to Men.

3.2.2. Annoyances

Annoyances' Distribution Chart
Figure 2



The present study shows that Annoyance strategies were 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 used 8.33% Annoyances as their complaint strategies to propose the complaint. Other groups, Men to Women (M-W) and Women to Women (W-W) also have the same percentage, they used 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 complainee responsibility but avoids mentioning the complainee as the guilty person. In the present study, the use of annoyances strategy was 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 complainee'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 complainee to avoid the guilty party.

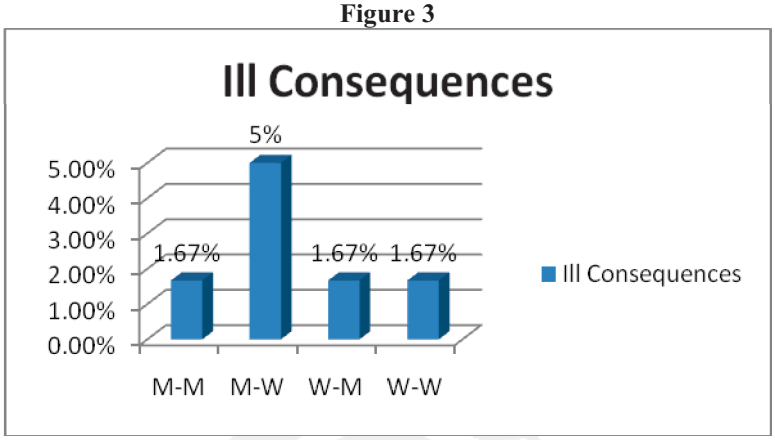
In this case, the use of Annoyances is understandable, considering the social status of complainer. The complainer is a woman and the complainee is a man. According to the gender construct, women use more feelings when they speak. Women are more likely to consider their interlocutor's feelings. Therefore, it is understandable that women used annoyances as their strategies to avoid the complainee as the guilty party, but this study found that this strategy is not preferred used by the respondents. It is proven by 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 complainee, but she only states the annoying situation and then makes a request to complainee to repair the condition.

3.2.3. Ill Consequences

Ill Consequences' Distribution Chart
Figure 3



The present study reveals that Ill Consequences strategies were used by the respondents only 5% on the highest occurrences. From the chart, Men to Women (M-W) used 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 used ill consequences complaint strategies only 1.67%. Ill consequences complaint strategies are the most uncommonly preferred strategies used by the respondents. It is shown by only 5 % of the respondents used 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 complainee responsibility but avoids mentioning the complainee as the guilty person. The difference is that the complainer states the utterances also to express the ill consequences resulting from the offence for which the complainee is held implicitly responsible. In the present study, the use of ill consequences strategy was found frequently in situation #1. See [4d] for example:

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

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

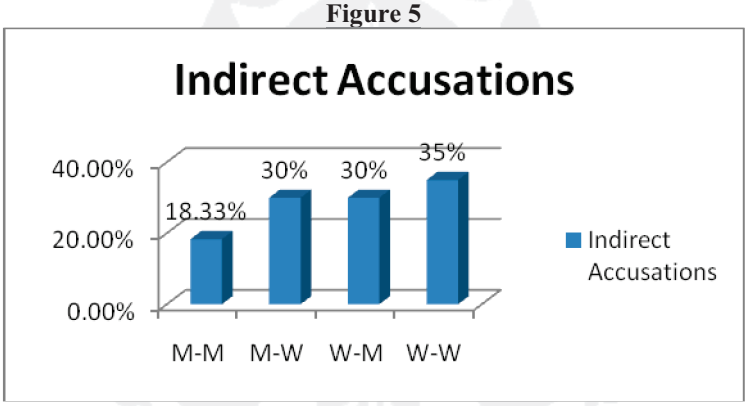
In [4d], the complainer expresses his ill consequence by saying, "why I can't use my camera again?" The complainer explicitly states her complaint, but he does not directly hold the complainee's responsibility for the problem. The complainer merely states the annoying situation by asking the question about the camera. The complainer asks why he cannot use the camera again as the ill consequences. However, the complainer does not mention the complainee directly to avoid the guilty party.

In this case, the use of ill consequence is understandable, considering the social status of complainer. The complainer is a Man and the complainee is a Woman. According to the gender construct, Men do more respect when they speak to Women. Men consider the women's feelings. Therefore, it is understandable that Men used ill consequences as their strategies to avoid the complainee as the guilty party, but this study indicated that this strategy is not preferred used by respondents. It is proven by only 5% of the respondents chose this strategy. It is because the result of complaining act is considered as not effective to get the complainee's 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 it for you". It can be considered to be an effort to support the complaining act on the previous statement.

3.2.4. Indirect Accusation

Indirect Accusation's Distribution Chart
Figure 5



The present study found that Indirect Accusations strategies were 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, they used 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 in the chart that 30% respondents used 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 was 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. Therefore, this is called an indirect accusation.

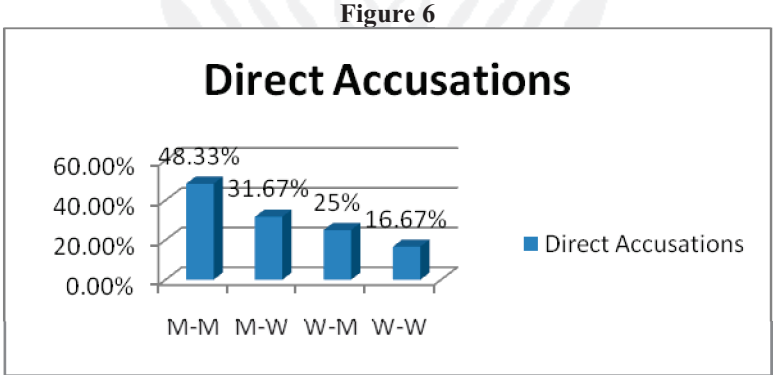
In this case, the use of indirect accusation is understandable from the perspective of the social status of the complainer. The complainer and complainee are Men, the usual stereotype is that Men do more direct to Men, but here the social status has more influence on this situation. The complainer is a student while the complainee is his lecturer. They are neither relative nor close friends, so they have a distance. Moreover, a student has lower power than a lecturer does. Whereas, when he pursues the complaint, the complainer considers the social background of the complainee who is 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. However, the social variables such as Power, Imposition and Distance were not deeply analyzed because this study focuses on the gender variable.

Therefore, it is understandable that an indirect accusation is the most uncommonly preferred strategies if comparing it with the other three groups. It is because it is not appropriate with the stereotype of a Men's speech act. They commonly put forward their feelings freely, but in this case, 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.

3.2.5. Direct Accusation

Direct Accusations' Distribution Chart
Figure 6



The present study found that Indirect Accusations strategies were 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) used 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 fall

into the second rank for the most preferred strategy that was used by respondents in four groups.

As mentioned earlier, Accusations are divided into two ways: indirect and direct accusation, both of which try to establish the agent of a complainable. This chart describes direct accusation as the second rank preferred strategies used by the respondents. By a direct accusation, the complainer directly accuses the complainee of having committed the offence.

In the present study, the use of a indirect accusation strategy was 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.

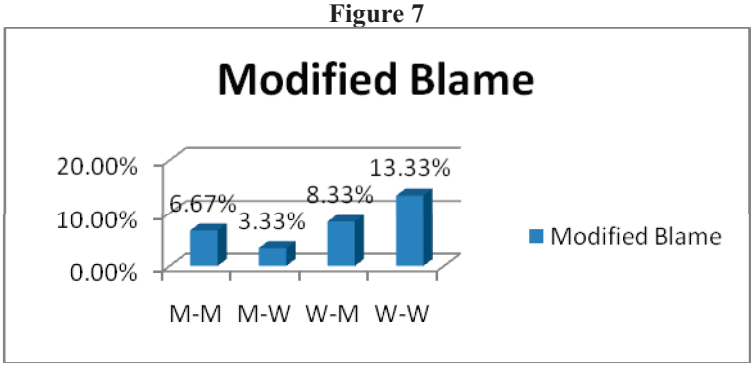
In these examples, the complainers directly state to the agents of the complainable and make the complainees the guilty party by explaining the situation. In 4[f], the complainer directly asks the hearer to shut his voice. By this direct statement, the hearer would become a guilty party and he is supposed 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 more and it is because the maintaining relationship between the student and the lecturer. It is evident in this situtuation that power relations have more influence on complaining acts.

3.2.6. Modified Blame

Modified Blame's Distribution Chart
Figure 7



The present study shows that Modified Blame strategies were 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)

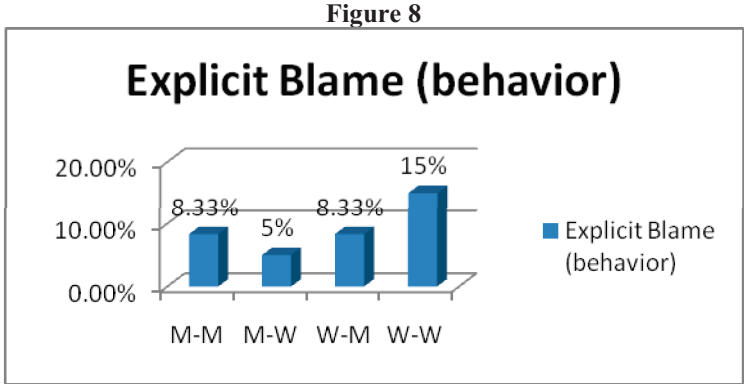
[4i] Complainer: Gosh, it's so noisy… I'm very sleepy I need to go to bed. Can you at least be quite a little bit?

In this utterance, the complainer cannot sleep well because of the noise, so she expressed the complaint by saying "Gosh, it's so noisy…" and she explained 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 complainee have an equal social distance and power. It is understandable that the modified blame is being used, considering the social status of the complainer. The complainer and complainee are both women. According to the common gender construct, 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 the softest way between the two blaming strategies. Modified blames are considered to be indirect, not being too straight in blaming acts.

3.2.7. Explicit Blame (Behavior)

Explicit Blame (behavior)'s Distribution Chart
Figure 8



The present study indicates that Explicit Blame (behavior) strategies were 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 the 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 complainee 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?

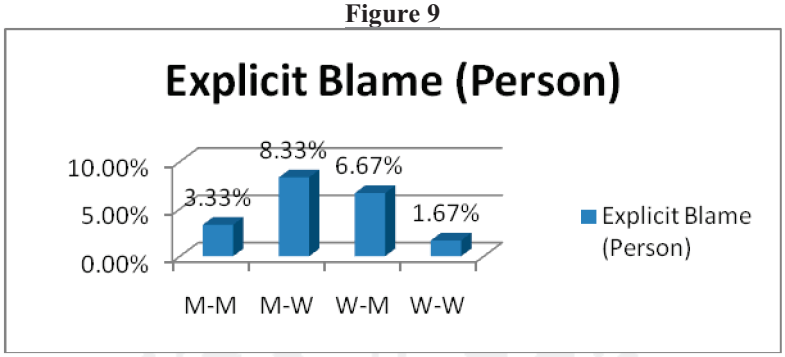
The unique characteristic of an explicit blame (behavior) is the explanation that the action is bad. It is sometimes considered to be softer than a modified blame. It is because of the way of "menasehati" or advise the complainee. In this utterance, the complainer cannot sleep well because of the noise, so she stated the complaint by advising "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." Here, the complainer explains that making any disturbing noise at night is annoying; the complainee should not make any distracting noise when she comes home at night. Moreover, the complainer stated the question in the last by asking "So, could you please to be careful next time?" as a request for repair.

In this case, 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. It is understandable why this is the case, considering

the social status of the complainer. The complainer and complainee are both women. According to the common gender construct, 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 of the consideration that an indirect blame is not too straight, but more refers to advising. A general women's stereotype is that they love to give advice to others, especially to women as the same gender; this activity involves sharing on the same understanding.

3.2.8. Explicit Blame (Person)

Explicit Blame (Person)'s Distribution Chart
Figure 9



The present study found that Explicit Blame (person) strategies were used by 8.33% of the respondents on the highest occurrences. From the chart, there is a unique fact that the respondents prefered to use this strategy to complain to a different gender and it is not commonly used to the same gender. It is proven by looking at the chart that shows 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 percentage facts 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] 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 uttered directly to the complainee. This characteristic of this strategy requires that the accused person is considered to be a non-responsible social member. In this situation, the complainer stated "Hey you, ugly-looking son of a bitch!!!" to initiate the complainee and it is definitely as a sarcastic utterance. Then, he continued 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.

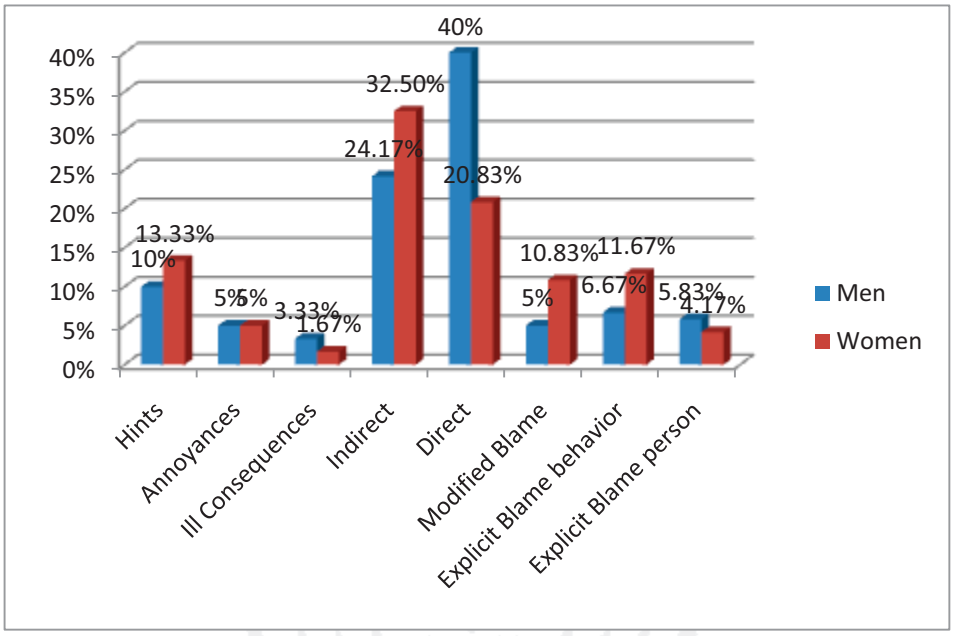
This strategy is frequently found in situation #1 and usually relates to Men, both to Men or by Men. It is acceptable because of the Men's characteristic

in which 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.

3.3. Style Differences between Men and Women in Complaining Acts

This present study focuses on the comparison between Men and Women in the speech act of complaining. It 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)

Distribution Chart between Men and Women
Figure 10



In the overall distribution chart, it is shown that men are the only ones that more frequently used direct accusations than women did, while, in the chart, it is evident that women used the complaining strategy more than men.

Men are the highest users of Direct Accusations because it is a common characteristic of men that 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.

As the chart shows, women are the most users of indirect complaints. It is reasonable because women tend to avoid breaking relationships. It is based on women's characteristic that 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 characteristic 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.

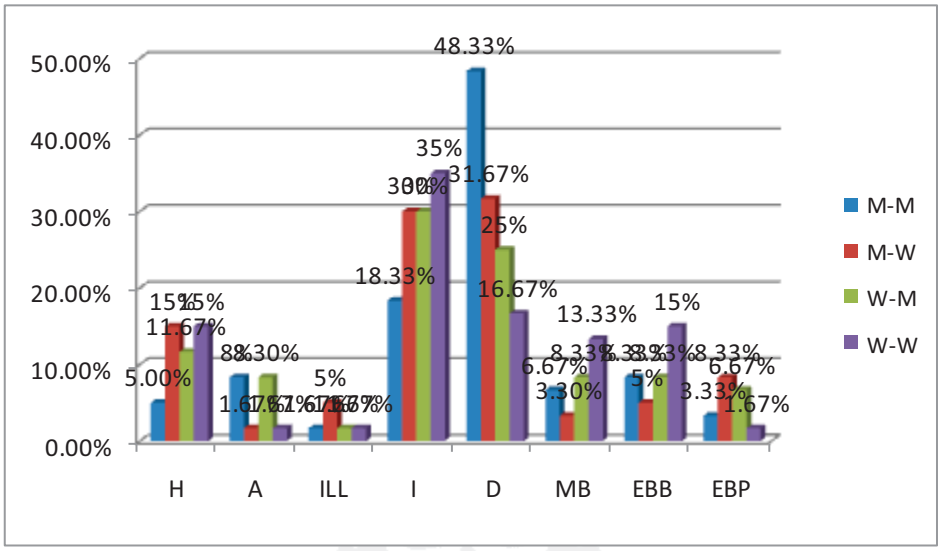
The chart also shows that the use of complaining strategies by women is more frequent in almost all strategies than by men. It is commonsensical because women apparently love complaining. Boxer (1996) states that complaining is discussed as a positive interaction among women (for instance, complaining 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 campared 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 way of language use from other groups with regard to the purpose of the speech act. In this case, complaining should be taken to improve the condition, therefore the blaming is considered to be the standard strategy in complaining.

The directness of men in complaining also is considered by Milroy's theory (1980) that claims 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 and it proves in the way they complain. Thus, men use direct accusations as their prefered complaining strategies.

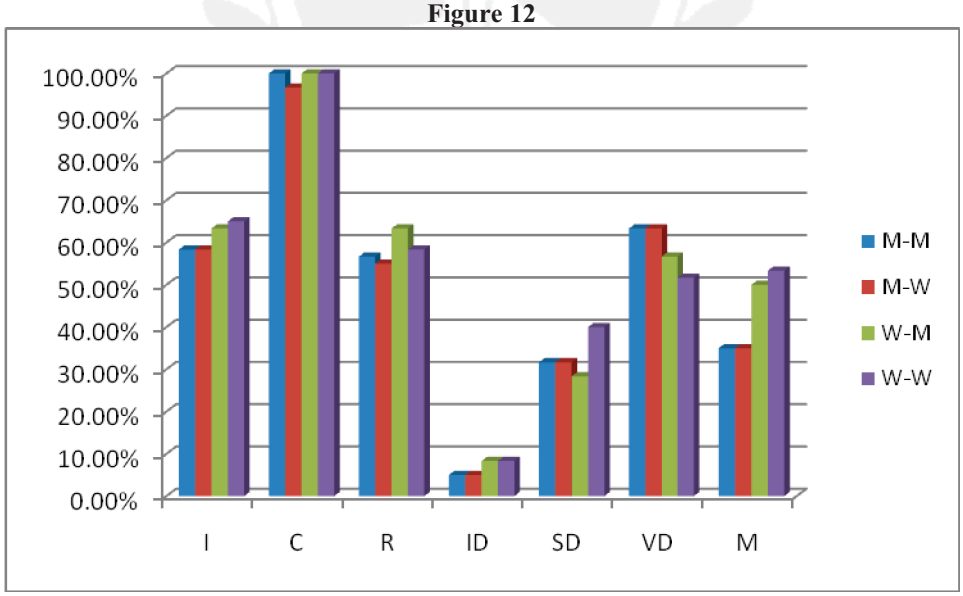
Discussing gender and how complaining acts differ among men and women, it would be better to discuss every group of respondents. In this study, respondents are divided into four groups: Men to Men (M-M), Men to Women (M-W), Women to Men (W-M), and Women to Women (W-W). Here are the distribution charts 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 therefore 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. Relating to the complainee, M-M has more users in direct accusations than in the M-W, 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 of the women's characteristic that encourages to make a good relationship with others and does 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. It is understandable because of the agent of complainables and feelings of the initiator. Men's are being 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, how the complainee knows 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. It is acceptable because of a women's characteristic that loves 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 (1922:237-254). He claims 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.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The research was 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. The researcher would reveal the different style of the realizations of complaining act between men and women focusing on gender perspective as the analyzer. This research is aimed to uncover the phenomenon in English Foreign Language Learners; especially the correlation of language and gender with the realizations of complaining.

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 used Direct Accusations as their major strategy while women used Indirect Accusations.

Regarding the Gender, the use of complaining strategies was influenced by the gender of the complainer and complainee. Men to Men (M-M) interaction was more direct than that of Men to Women (M-W). It is supported by M-M which had more users in direct accusations than in the M-W. While the women, Women to Women (W-W) group used 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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