AN INVESTIGATION OF MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS’ ORAL FEEDBACK IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM: A FOCUS ON ELICITATION & REFORMULATION

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Abstract
The primary goal of this study is to analyze the elicitation and reformulation used by male and female teachers in English classes. In this descriptive qualitative study, the researcher collected data from observation and in-depth interviews in three class meetings for 135 minutes (45 minutes/meeting). Ten teachers, five male, and five female, from one Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri in Medan City, North Sumatra. The data were analyzed using Tsui’s Elicitation and Martinot’s Reformulation categorization. The findings reveal that male and female teachers similarly use five elicitation types: inform, confirm, agree, repeat, and clarify, where the most dominant type of elicitation is confirmed. In addition, three different types of reformulation were found in the reformulation feedback: the same construction, transformation, and restructured statements. In contrast, transformation was the dominant type used by the teachers. In practicing oral feedback, especially elicitation, male teachers use standard language to elicit the students’ utterances, while female teachers ask students to make the teaching and learning process interactive. In reformulation, the study results show that male teachers only provide oral feedback by giving instructions, while female teachers provide oral feedback by giving instructions and reformulating utterances. Furthermore, three main reasons were found for teachers to provide oral feedback, namely: to detect mistakes made by students, to stimulate students to interact with the teacher, and to create reflective and effective feedback practices.

Keywords
Elicitation, Oral Feedback, Reformulation

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INTRODUCTION

English is increasingly popular as a world language or lingua franca in this globalization era. It is primarily used as a tool of communication between people of different nationalities and mother tongues for various purposes, including commerce, education, business, and tourism (Crystal, 2003; Fithriani, 2017). As a consequence, the English language is taught in formal educational settings in many countries around the world, including Indonesia. The only foreign language that must be taught to all Indonesian students, from high school up to higher education levels, is English (Kusuma, 2018). Indonesian government regulates English teaching and learning by designing the curriculum to be used in educational institutions, especially at the high school level, in order to ensure that English as a foreign language (EFL) learning is rooted in the same purpose (Maili & Hestiningsih, 2017).

The curriculum for learning English in Indonesia highlighted not only the four hard language skills (writing, reading, listening, and speaking) but also soft skills such as vocabulary and grammar. Following the objectives of the curriculum, classroom interaction in English classes in Indonesia is designed to help students develop these four skills, especially speaking, with the assistance of their teacher. Effective communication in the target language is an essential indicator of success for students in the learning process (Ismi, 2022). Someone is considered an expert in English if they are able to communicate in English (Daulay et al., 2021). Mastery of speaking in English is an important priority for those who are learning English as a second or foreign language (Goh & Burns, 2012). Their ability to communicate orally in the target language is frequently judged according to how well they can acquire a new language. Unquestionably, having sufficient skill in speaking is very important, which can be improved through regular interactions that take place in the classroom (Crystal, 2003; Fithriani, 2017).

Interacting using the target language in a boisterous environment is one of the aspects that can assist learners in improving their speaking abilities, specifically when the teacher and the students are involved in the learning process. Teacher’s oral feedback is one aspect that almost exists in classroom interaction which is often provided to provoke students to speak. Therefore, how feedback is given during oral interactions with students in the classroom is an important topic to discuss. Empirical evidence has shown the relationship between teacher oral feedback with students learning success, particularly in mastering speaking skills (Khairani & Refnaldi, 2020). To maximize
this positive impact of teacher oral feedback on students’ English-speaking skills, the feedback provided should be effective in supporting student learning.

One of the techniques used by the teacher to invite students to provide feedback is the elicitation approach. Elicitation is a term that refers to the processes that enable the teacher to get the students to reveal information rather than just giving it to them (Walsh, 2002). Asking questions is a method that can be employed for the purpose of acquiring knowledge. Asking questions is one method of eliciting information. The most effective technique to elicit responses and insights from students is to pose questions to them (Siberman, 2018). Elicitation is a technique used in language classrooms to get students to speak so that their speaking proficiency can be assessed. On the other side, one strategy for rectifying errors is called reformulation. In reformulation, the teacher repeats what the learner has said but correctly without drawing attention explicitly (Hamdayama, 2022).

The importance of oral feedback in classroom interaction is something that interests researchers. Since English is a required subject and is essentially an international language, this is a very interesting topic to investigate. But fundamentally, there are numerous errors in the field, such as differences between what male and female teachers teach; many of them are neglected during the learning process. Therefore, feedback is required to recognize the errors that exist in learning English.

A plethora of studies have been conducted to analyze how oral feedback is realized in the classroom, which focuses on diverse topics such as the types of oral feedback provided (Irawan & Salija, 2017; Khairani & Refnaldi, 2020), the effect of recorded oral feedback on EFL leaners’ writing (Rezazadeh et al., 2018; Solhi & Eginli, 2020), and students’ perceptions towards oral corrective feedback in a speaking class (Mulyani et al., 2022; Muslem et al., 2021). Studies on this topic have also been conducted in diverse EFL educational levels, including junior high schools, senior high schools, and universities (Fithriani, 2017; Li, 2014; Purwandari, 2021).

However, although many studies have focused on related topics of oral feedback, very few have seen this topic from the gender divide perspective. Theoretically, male and female teachers have different styles. Furthermore, males and females are also known to use language differently (Wahyuningsih, 2018). In line with this argument, (Chavez, 2000) argued that different genders belong to classes with different traits. Females, in general, often complement each other, ask questions referring to previous conversations, and use indirect language. Within the educational context, female teachers were found to be more talkative, stimulating, and patient than male
teachers. They are also referred to as communicative facilitators who may be more tolerant of students using their first language. However, female teachers were also criticized for pushing their chosen topic too much and for asking too many questions, mainly to make the conversation flow more easily and maintain its momentum. Meanwhile, male teachers, in dealing with their students, teach more based on their experiences while still learning. For example, a class led by a male teacher has a faster pace, a lot of teaching time (excessive), unexpected topic shifts, and students tend to respond simply but frequently things (Freire, 2003).

Anchored to the assumption that male and female teachers use language as a means of communication in their classrooms differently, it is thus worth investigating if female and male EFL teachers practice oral feedback, particularly elicitation, and reformulation, differently. This study was conducted to investigate these assumed differences and explore why these differences occur from the teachers’ perspectives.

METHOD

A descriptive qualitative design was used in the course of the research (Cresswell, 2009). Creswell defined descriptive qualitative research as an exploration of a problem, development of a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon, collection of data based on words, analysis of the data for description using a text analysis form, and interpretation of the findings that have a more significant meaning are some of the characteristics that define the qualitative method (Cresswell, 2012). Since this study focused on the analysis of the elicitation and reformulation strategies utilized by male and female teachers based on the different gender in English classroom interaction, this particular design is considered suitable for the purpose.

This research employed a population of all school teachers and had ten respondents as a sample. The informants consisted of five male teachers and five female teachers in one Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri in Medan City, North Sumatra.

The interview was conducted using an English-language audio recording, but participants were allowed to combine it with Indonesian if they had limited words to answer. The purpose of the interviews is to discover rationale and actual information regarding teacher elicitation during the learning process. It also provides an in-depth comprehension of teachers’ frequently expressed opinions regarding the reasons they employ elicitation and reformulation when teaching English. The development of interview questions was built on the analysis of observational data. Each
interview extended a single hour. Before analysis, audio recordings were transcribed accurately. Inductive thematic analysis was performed on transcription. Inductive content analysis, which seeks to answer research questions by analyzing a set of data, is primarily concerned with identifying themes (Kiger & Varpio, 2020).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The objective of this study was to find out the dominant types of oral feedback provided by male and female teachers, the practice of oral feedback in the English classroom, and the teachers’ perceptions of male and female oral feedback practice. Based on the results, the data gained were analyzed by using interactive analytical (Miles et al., 2014). There were three findings found in this study which are divided into three sub-themes, namely: male and female dominant types of oral feedback, teacher oral feedback practice, and reasons for teachers’ oral feedback practice. The table below outlines the different percentages of male and female teachers providing oral feedback in English classrooms.

Male and Female Dominant Types of Oral Feedback

The teaching and learning process is implemented by both male and female teachers through two kinds of oral feedback, namely elicitation and reformulation. Based on the classroom observation, it is found that male and female teachers both give oral feedback in different ways. Based on the analysis of the data revealed that there are found five types of elicitation and four types of reformulation used by both male and female teachers. Both male and female teachers produced 72 elicitations and 39 reformulations in total. A detailed description will be discussed in the following:

Figure 1. The Total Number and Percentage of Elicitations
A closer look at the data in Figure 1 reveals that the male and the female teachers used elicitation in different amounts. There are five types of elicitation, namely elicitation inform, elicitation confirm, elicitation agree, elicitation repeat, and elicitation clarify (Tsui, 1995). From Figure 1, it can be seen that male and female teachers use different amounts of reformulation. The male teacher produced 32 elicitations, while the female teacher produced 40 elicitations.

It is evident that each type of elicitation used by male and female teachers in English class interaction had a significant difference. In English classroom interactions, female teachers are more likely to use elicitation in providing oral feedback. Both male and female teachers use an equal amount of ‘elicitation inform’ in English classroom Interaction. In addition, the female teacher slightly used ‘elicitation confirm’ rather than the male teacher, and the same thing could be seen in ‘elicitation agree’. According to the data in the table, it was revealed that both male and female English teachers didn’t use the ‘elicitation commit’ during the English classroom interaction. Moreover, it was discovered that male teachers used a greater number of ‘elicitation repeats’ than female teachers. In terms of the type of elicitation known as ‘elicitation clarify’, there is a significant difference between the frequency of male and female teachers. The male teacher tended to use this type of feedback rather than the female teacher. Meanwhile, the female teachers were more engrossed with the class as a whole rather than the male teacher. As a result, this indicates that there are considerable disparities between the ways of male and female teachers in providing oral feedback to their students in English classrooms. Nevertheless, it was found that elicitation confirmation is the dominant type of oral feedback used by both of the teachers, as indicated by 37% in the table above.

**Figure 2. The Total Number and Percentage of Reformulations**
The total number and percentage of reformulations created by the male and the female teacher are displayed in Figure 2. A closer look at the data in Figure 2 reveals that the male and the female teachers used reformulation in different amounts. The male teacher produced 21 reformulations, while the female teacher produced 18 reformulations. There are four types of reformulation, namely: reformulated statement, transformation, restructured statements, and semantic paraphrase (Martinot, 2015). From Figure 2 above, the male teacher produced 21 reformulations, while the female teacher produced 18 reformulations.

Based on the aforementioned table above, the table is evident that teachers' reformulations of each type of English class interaction differ significantly. It can be seen from the percentage of reformulation types used by male and female teachers that are provided in Figure 2. In English classroom interactions, male teachers are more likely to make use of reformulation rather than the female teacher. Both male and female teachers use an equal amount of ‘same construction’ in the English classroom interaction. In addition, the male teacher slightly used ‘transformation’ rather than the female teacher. In terms of the type of reformulation known as ‘restructured statements’, there is a significant difference between the frequency of male and female teachers. The female teacher tended to use this type of oral feedback rather than the male teacher. According to the data in the table, it was revealed that both male and female English teachers didn’t use the ‘semantic paraphrase’ in providing oral feedback. Meanwhile, male teachers were more scrupulous in providing feedback in the English classroom rather than the female teacher. In conclusion, reformulation ‘transformation’ is still the dominant type used by both of the teachers, as indicated by 38% in providing oral feedback.

Based on the observation result, the researcher identified the most frequent type of elicitation and reformulation in oral feedback practice. The following is the description how the way teachers practice providing oral feedback in the English classroom, namely ‘elicitation confirm’ and ‘transformation reformulation’.

**Teacher Oral Feedback Practices**

Elicitation and reformulation are essential in English class interaction. Teachers’ elicitation in a language class not only makes active learning but also can develop students’ language understanding (Usman et al., 2018). Furthermore, the function of reformulation is to correct students’ errors. The analysis of the observation data shows that there are five types of elicitation used by the teachers, namely elicitation inform, elicitation confirm, elicitation agree, elicitation repeat, and
elicitation clarify, as well as three reformulation types, namely reformulation same construction, reformulation transformation, and reformulation restructured statements when determining the type of elicitation and reformulation that took place in English class. As a result, not all types of elicitation and reformulation are used by male and female teachers in classroom interaction (Tsui, 1995). So, female teachers tend to use elicitation more often to stimulate the students to answer the teachers’ questions completely, while male teachers use reformulation to improve the quality of students’ speaking skills.

Elicitation Confirm

Based on the percentage results above, it can be seen that the highest type of elicitation technique used by male and female teachers is Elicitation Confirm. The teacher would often employ this strategy in order to inquire about the student’s areas of concern or their presumptions on the subjects that are currently being discussed. As can be seen from Table 1, both of the teachers will often ask students for their assumptions. This type of elicitation strategy is also utilized by teachers to verify their students’ level of comprehension by asking yes/no questions or questioning the students directly. If the students are able to accurately respond to the questions, this may be an indication that they have already comprehended the topic. Regardless of the fact that the female and male teachers employ the same type of elicitation, the teacher present in quite different ways, as can be seen in the excerpts below:

Table 1. Observation 1 in English Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male Teacher</th>
<th>Female Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher:</td>
<td>Teacher:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: Today, we</td>
<td>: Is there any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will discuss</td>
<td>source from the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the report</td>
<td>news?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>text and the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>example of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student:</td>
<td>Students:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: (Silent)</td>
<td>: Yes, miss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher:</td>
<td>Teacher:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: Are report</td>
<td>: Is it located</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>text and news</td>
<td>in the first paragraph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>item text the</td>
<td>of the text?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>same?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student:</td>
<td>Students:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: No, sir</td>
<td>: No, in the last paragraph,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>miss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: Because they have a different goal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from the illustrations provided in the excerpt above, both of the teachers provided the elicitation confirmation to elicit the students’ responses in the English classroom. From the excerpt above, the findings showed that the teacher utilized elicitation confirm in stimulating
the students to respond to the teacher’s utterances. Typically, the male teacher used standard language to elicit the students’ utterances. Meanwhile, female teachers often ask the students more in order to make the teaching and learning process becomes active.

**Transformation Reformulation**

Based on the percentage results above, it can be seen that Transformation reformulation is the highest type of elicitation technique used by male and female teachers. The teacher would often employ this strategy in order to correct students’ utterances into good form. Transformation reformulation can have the same lexical items and the same meaning but have a different construction. As can be seen from Table 2, both of the teachers will reformulate the students’ utterances. This type of reformulation is also utilized by teachers to correct the students’ errors by giving feedback and the right sentences. Regardless of the fact that the female and male teachers employ the same type of reformulation, the teacher present in quite different ways, as can be seen in the excerpts below:

**Table 2. Observation 2 in English Classroom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male Teacher</th>
<th>Female Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student: I do my homework at my friend’s house</td>
<td>Student: I have been to the bookstore last Friday night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: No, Ana, change it into passive voice.</td>
<td>Teacher: Use the simple past. You went to the bookstore last Friday night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student: My homework is done by me at my friend’s house</td>
<td>Student: Ok, miss, I went to the bookstore last Friday night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: Very good!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from the illustrations provided in the excerpt above, both of the teachers reformulated the students’ utterances in the English classroom. This type of reformulation is also utilized by teachers to correct the students’ errors by giving feedback and the right sentences. The findings showed that the male teacher only gave oral feedback by giving the instruction. On the other hand, the female teacher typically provided oral feedback by giving the instruction and reformulating the utterances into good form.

**Reasons for Teachers’ Oral Feedback Practice**

In accordance with the findings and analysis of the data, each of the English teachers provided oral feedback to their students during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In addition, the teachers did not provide all of the relevant types of oral feedback, particularly in terms of elicitation and reformulation. The data from the interview reveals that both female and
male teacher believes that providing oral feedback is essential for stimulating the students to be actively involved in English classroom interaction. The researchers identified three themes regarding the main reasons for teachers to utilize oral feedback, such as: to detect the errors made by the students, to stimulate students to make an interaction with the teacher, and to create reflective and effective feedback practices.

**Theme One: To Detect the Errors Made By the Students**

The first reason why male and female teachers provide oral feedback in English classrooms is that feedback is intended to provide students with the knowledge they need in order to enhance their performance. Feedback can encourage students to learn, particularly foreign languages such as English. Since English is not the student’s primary language, students frequently have difficulties and make errors when speaking English in the classroom. Consequently, students need feedback on their speaking ability, including whether they are fluent, accurate, or proper at speaking English. Oral feedback is used to immediately encourage students or correct them when making an error (Mahdi & Saadany, 2013). In general, teachers have a highly developed sense of error detection because the teacher is aware that their students are likely to make a specific type of mistake, even though the surrounding circumstances make it possible to arrive at a different, more accurate interpretation. It is necessary that the students are well-prepared in order to remain clear of making errors in their speaking. The teacher’s perception in the interview showed below:

“The function of feedback is to encourage the students’ response to be an enthusiast in answering the teacher’s question” (male teacher, excerpt 1).

“I think feedback is a response that I gave to student learning outcomes. From the feedback, and I know the extent of students’ material that already mastered” (female teacher, excerpt 2).

**Theme Two: To stimulate Students to Make Interaction With the Teacher**

In order to encourage the students to be more excited when the teacher engages students in the teaching and learning process, the teacher employed oral feedback, particularly elicitation, and reformulation, as part of the process of teaching and learning in order to accomplish the objectives. It is supported by a theory in order to create active students in the classroom’s teaching and learning process, both teachers and students must be eager to interact (Khairani & Refnaldi, 2020). The teacher’s perception in the interview showed below:

“Oral feedback is very important to use as a strategy to make the students’ response to our questions.” (male teacher, excerpt 3).
“Feedback is very important to know how students’ respond on the English subject that we teach. And do not give negative feedback in teaching because the students’ will be afraid to speak more in the classroom.” (female teacher, excerpt 4).

Theme Three: To Create Reflective and Effective Feedback Practices

Giving oral feedback is one method that is often used by teachers to provoke students to speak. In order to develop students’ speaking skills, the teacher should provide effective and supportive feedback in the classroom. Providing teachers’ feedback in the process of students’ development is important, especially in oral feedback. Understanding how students interpret teachers’ oral feedback is essential because it enables teachers to create reflective and effective feedback practices (Lee, 2008). Theoretically, male and female teachers have different styles. Furthermore, males and females are also known to use language differently (Wahyuningsih, 2018). It is also supported by the interview results, as follows:

“I would like to use elicitation repeat in the classroom because the students are required to repeat their answers. And I can validate the students’ answer whether correct or incorrect” (male teacher, excerpt 5).

“Elicitation confirm is the most frequent elicitation that I use in teaching English. I would often employ this strategy in order to inquire about the student’s areas of concern or their presumptions on the subjects that are currently being discussed.” (female teacher, excerpt 6).

Discussion

Based on the aforementioned research findings, it is evident that this study discovered three findings that can be divided into three sub-themes: male and female teachers’ oral feedback, teacher oral feedback practices, and reasons for teachers’ oral feedback practice. In the dominant type of male and female oral feedback, it is evident that male and female teachers use different elicitation techniques, as demonstrated by the observation that female teachers are frequently inclined to use elicitation while providing oral feedback rather than elicitation confirm. In English classroom interactions, male teachers are frequently more inclined than female teachers to employ reformulation. Both male and female teachers use the same number of ‘same construction’ in English class interactions. In addition, male teachers employed the ‘transformation’ more rarely than female teachers. Regarding the type of reformulation known as ‘restructured statements,’ there is a substantial difference between the number of male and female teachers. Female teachers are more likely than male teachers to use this type of oral feedback. According to the data in Figure 2, neither
male nor female English teachers used 'semantic paraphrase' when providing oral feedback. In English class, male teachers provided more comprehensive feedback than female teachers. In conclusion, 'transformation' reformulation is still the most prevalent type used by the two teachers, with as much as 38% providing oral feedback.

The results of this study are in accordance with the findings of research conducted by Irawan & Erfiani (2017) dan (Martinot, 2015) with the results of the study. The teacher employed five types of oral feedback, namely: evaluation, correction, description, interaction, and motivational feedback. Teachers provided oral feedback to students in a variety of methods, including evaluating their work or performance, identifying and correcting their errors, providing information about their accomplishments and learning strategies, outlining their responses, and motivating the students. It is the obligation and responsibility of the teacher to provide oral feedback to the students. Teachers use oral feedback in their interactions with students in English classes because it has a positive impact on students. Additionally, the teacher considers the other impact of not receiving oral feedback.

In the teacher's oral feedback activity, female teachers are inclined to use elicitation more frequently to encourage students to answer the teacher’s questions thoroughly, while male teachers use reformulation to improve the quality of students’ speaking skills. In elicitation, confirmed results indicated that teachers use elicitation confirm to encourage students to respond to the teacher’s utterance. Typically, male teachers use standard language to elicit student utterances, whereas female teachers express more questions to engage students in the learning process. Male teachers only provide oral feedback in the form of instructions, whereas female teachers typically provide oral feedback in the form of instructions and reformulation of the utterance. According to the results, both female and male teachers believed that providing oral feedback was essential in motivating students to participate actively in English classroom interactions. Researchers identified three themes regarding the primary reasons for oral feedback by teachers, including detecting the errors made by the students, stimulating students to make an interaction with the teacher, and creating reflective and effective feedback practices.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, male and female teachers similarly used five types of elicitation, namely Elicitation inform, elicitation confirm, elicitation agree, elicitation repeat, and Elicitation clarify,
where elicitation confirm was the dominant type of elicitation. Besides that, in reformulation feedback, there were found three different types of reformulation, namely, same construction, transformation, and restructured statements, were used by the teachers, whereas transformation was the dominant form used by both of the teachers. Then, in practicing oral feedback, especially in elicitation, it was found that male teachers used standard language to elicit the students’ utterances. Meanwhile, female teachers often ask the students more in order to make the teaching and learning process becomes active. In reformulation, the findings showed that the male teacher only gave oral feedback by giving the instruction. On the other hand, the female teacher typically provided oral feedback by giving the instruction and reformulating the utterances into good form. Furthermore, there were found three primary reasons for teachers to provide oral feedback, namely: to detect the errors made by the students, to stimulate students to make an interaction with the teacher, and to create reflective and effective feedback practices.

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