



An Analysis of Communication Style Used by Male and Female Undergraduate Students

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abstract— The variation in communication styles used by male and female do not occur without any reason, the original characters of both genders are affects the way they communicate. It happened due to the habits that both genders carry out when they communicate. This research aimed to know the communication styles used by male and female undergraduate student and figure out the relation of communication styles used by male and female undergraduate students in affecting their communication ability in public speaking course. The researcher developed a case-study research using qualitative method to get the research. Direct observation and questionnaire used to collect the data in this research. The research participants are the second years students of English Education Department of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro years 2023/2024. The results of this research showed that male undergraduate students mostly used assertive communication style while female undergraduate students mostly used passive-aggressive communication style. On the other hand the undergraduate students that used assertive communication style are tend to have a good speaking ability in public speaking course.

Keywords— Communication Styles, Gender Communication, Speaking Ability

abstrak—Keragaman gaya berkomunikasi yang digunakan oleh laki-laki dan perempuan tidak terbentuk tanpa alasan, karakter-karakter alami dari kedua gender mempengaruhi cara mereka berkomunikasi. Hal ini terjadi karena kebiasaan yang dibawa oleh kedua gender ketika mereka berkomunikasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui gaya berkomunikasi yang digunakan oleh mahasiswa laki-laki dan perempuan dan untuk memahami pengaruh gaya berkomunikasi yang digunakan oleh mahasiswa laki-laki dan perempuan pada kemampuan berbicara mereka dalam mata kuliah public speaking. Peneliti mengembangkan penelitian studi kasus dengan menggunakan metode penelitian qualitative untuk mendapatkan data penelitian. Observasi langsung, dan angket atau kuesioner digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data pada penelitian ini. Peserta pada penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa tahun kedua dari jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro tahun 2023/2024. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa laki-laki kebanyakan menggunakan gaya berkomunikasi assertive, sementara mahasiswa perempuan cenderung menggunakan gaya berkomunikasi passive-aggressive. Di sisi lain, mahasiswa yang menggunakan gaya berkomunikasi assertive cenderung memiliki kemampuan berbicara yang bagus.

Kata kunci— Gaya Berkomunikasi, Komunikasi Gender, Kemampuan Berbicara

INTRODUCTION

Communication, language and speaking have a deep relation since language is the communication tools used by every human in this world while Speaking is an integral component of language and communication, it also playing a crucial role in facilitating effective communication. Language is a media to communicate used by everyone for their daily life in order to share the information and gives arguments to others (Rabiah et al., 2012). According to Brown (2001: 271), the ability to speak is inherently connected to communication. Speaking proficiency can be defined as the aptitude to utilize language effectively for conveying intended meanings, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and information with others across various life scenarios. The original characters of male and female are also affects the way they communicate, which also determines the existence of this variations. According to Chugrai (2015) on her article the prevalent consensus is that female communicate more elaborately, subtly, and emotionally, which can convey the lack of confidence, authority, and hesitancy. While it's generally believed that male communicate in a direct, concise, and instrumental.

On the other hand, society is also the main factor that causes the variation in communication styles used by male and female. (Tench et al., 2017) However, it might also be claimed that genderlect is a product of socialization, which differs for boys and girls as they grow older, rather that something that people select. It can be explained that individuals acquire diverse communication skill. The influence of gender in communication also affects the communication skill of both gender.

In this current era, an effective communication skills is something that most people must have. To have this, people need to know the characters and styles of communication and have a good speaking ability, so that the miscommunication would not occur. (Malik, 2018) the effective speaking is crucial requirement for professional life. From that statement we can say that having a good speaking skills is necessary in order to be able to balance the society, by knowing the styles of communication is the first step to achieving the effectiveness in communication and having a good speaking ability is the first sign of effective communication.

In educational scope, communication skills like speaking is very important in conveying the educational information. Teachers, parents and even the students themselves must understand that the suitable styles of communication improves a beter comprehension as well as future professional achievement (Pânișoară et al., 2015). In today's language teaching, the discussion, introduction, and acquisition of communicative competence are highly essential for both teachers and students(Isnaini & Rohmah, 2022).

In this case, the variation of communication styles used by male and female are very interesting topic to discuss since it's related to the social matters which all people face it everyday in their daily life. The theory of communication styles explained by a psychologist Marcus (1987) is used in this research. He classified communication styles into four types;

1. Aggressive Style

This types of communication refers on how individu expressing their thoughts and feeling clearly when they come up. An individu with an aggressive communication style can be described as someone who prioritize their own rights and goals above those of others.

2. Passive Style

An individual refrains from expressing their wants, opinions, or value in this kind of conversation. The individual frequently puts other people's needs, values, and opinions ahead of their own. Individuals who engage in passive communication often disregard their own needs, occasionally allowing others to take advantage of them instead of asserting themselves. They could be too contrite, overly apologetic, or dependent on other people to make decisions for them.

3. Assertive Style

Assertive communication refers to the capacity of effectively express oneself while also considering and respecting the rights and side of others. It involves advocating for one's own rights, needs, and personal boundaries in a respectful manner (Pipaş & Jaradat, 2010).

4. Passive-Aggressive style

Passive-aggressive communication is a communication style characterized by individuals who outwardly display passivity but covertly express their anger through subtle, indirect, or behind-the-scenes actions.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher identified two aim of this research: 1) To know the communication styles used by male and female undergraduate student based on Marcus (1987) theory. 2) To figure out the relation of communication styles used by male and female undergraduate students in affecting their speaking ability specifically in public speaking course.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a qualitative approach since the type of this research is a case-study research which focused on gaining a deep understanding of the phenomenon of the variation of communication style that occurred among the second-year student of English education department at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. This research involved the 1st years students of English education department as the participants, comprising both male and female students.

Interview, questionnaire and test are used to collect the detail data and information related to communication styles of the participants and how it affects their academy matters. The direct observation used to figure out their speaking ability in public speaking course. While the questionnaire is used to strengthen the results obtained from observation to further ensure the accuracy of the data acquired from the observation and to know deeper about the communication styles they used.

The Questionnaire used in this research was adapted and connected to the characteristic of each communication styles explain by Marcus (1987). The multiple choices is the type of questionnaire used in this research. The participants are able to choose freely 'Yes' or 'No' for the question that display on the questionnaire. The researcher prepare 20 list of questions that consist of 5 questions for each communication style, the questions is related to each communication styles patterns, character and behavior.

The interview used in this research is prepare to give the strength for the results of questionnaire, while the semi-structured interview is conducted due to the flexible of this type of interview.

The participants of this research is the 1st year undergraduate students of English education department of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. 20 total of undergraduate students participate in this research, consists of 10 male undergraduate students and 10 female undergraduate students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

Table 1. The Result of Questionnaire

| NO | LIST OF QUESTION | M | | F | |
|----|--|---|----|---|----|
| | | Y | N | Y | N |
| 1 | Do you like to be the leader of the team? (Assertive) | 2 | 8 | 3 | 7 |
| 2 | Do you like to listen to others, rather than talking? (Passive) | 8 | 2 | 8 | 2 |
| 3 | In a debate, do you like to argue (Aggressive) | 5 | 5 | 2 | 8 |
| 4 | When you feel uncomfortable, do you speak up about it? (Assertive) | 4 | 6 | 4 | 6 |
| 5 | When you communicate with others, do you talk directly? (Assertive) | 9 | 1 | 6 | 4 |
| 6 | Do you often use sarcasm? (Aggressive) | 4 | 6 | 4 | 6 |
| 7 | In a team, do you like to be the member? (Passive) | 9 | 1 | 6 | 4 |
| 8 | Do you often refuse to perform in front of audience? (Passive) | 0 | 10 | 2 | 8 |
| 9 | Do you often feel that you are better than everyone? (Aggressive) | 7 | 3 | 6 | 4 |
| 10 | Do you like to interrupts others? (Aggressive) | 1 | 9 | 1 | 9 |
| 11 | Do you often say yes even when you are disagree? (Passive-Aggressive) | 5 | 5 | 8 | 2 |
| 12 | Do you often help others, even when you actually couldn't help them? (Aggressive) | 7 | 3 | 6 | 4 |
| 13 | Do you like to present and describe your opinion? (Assertive) | 7 | 3 | 6 | 4 |
| 14 | Do you often keep your disagreement? (Passive_Aggressive) | 6 | 4 | 7 | 3 |
| 15 | Do you like small talk? (Passive) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 16 | Do you often hide your feeling ? (Passive- Aggressive) | 8 | 2 | 8 | 2 |
| 17 | In a team, do you like to ask others opinion before make a decision? (Assertive) | 9 | 1 | 8 | 2 |
| 18 | In a team, do you often decided something by yourself? (Aggressive) | 2 | 8 | 0 | 10 |
| 19 | Do you often say sorry even when you are right? (Passive) | 7 | 3 | 9 | 1 |
| 20 | Do you often talk behind? (Passive- Aggressive) | 3 | 7 | 5 | 5 |

The result of the questionnaire showed that there are 2/10 male students use assertive communication style (male student 2 and 10), 1/10 male student use aggressive communication style (male student 5), 2/10 male students use passive communication style (male student 3 and 8).

On the other hand, 2/10 female students use assertive communication style (female students 7 and 8), 4/10 female students use passive-aggressive communication style (female student 1,6,9 and 10), 2/10 female students use passive communication style (female student 2 and 4).

The data from the questionnaire only figure out 5 of 10 male students communication styles and 8 of 10 female students communication styles. The rest 7 participants still need clarification and strenght. So, to figure out the communication style of male students 1,4,6,7,9 and female students 3 and 5. The researcher conducted the semi-structure interview.

The results of the interview shows that the male student 1,9 and 7 are used assertive communication style, the male student 4 and 6 used passive communication style. On the other hand, the female student 3 used assertive communication styles and the female student 5 used passive-aggressive communication style

To find out the effect of communication styles used by male and female undergraduate students on their speaking ability in public speaking course, the researcher used test with speaking scoring rubric adapted from Luturkey. In this test there are four aspect that are pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and fluency. The criteria for fluency assessment encompass the pace of speech, the richness of content in speech (such as fillers), and pauses during speech (Fitrianingsih, 2017). From that statement the type of test that conducted is the speech test for speaking ability.

Table 2. The speaking test results

| STUDENT | COMMUNICATION STYLES | ASPECT | | | | TO TAL |
|---------|--------------------------------|--------|---|---|---|-----------|
| | | P | G | V | F | |
| MALE 1 | Assertive Communication Style | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 16 |
| MALE 2 | Assertive Communication Style | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 15 |
| MALE 3 | Passive Communication Style | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 12 |
| MALE 4 | Passive Communication Style | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 13 |
| MALE 5 | Aggressive Communication Style | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 14 |
| MALE 6 | Passive Communication Style | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 12 |
| MALE 7 | Assertive Communication Style | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 15 |
| MALE 8 | Passive Communication Style | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 12 |
| MALE 9 | Assertive Communication Style | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 16 |
| MALE 10 | Assertive Communication Style | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 14 |

| STUDENT | COMMUNICATION STYLES | ASPECT | | | | TO TAL |
|-----------|--|--------|---|---|---|-----------|
| | | P | G | V | F | |
| FEMALE 1 | Passive-Aggressive Communication Style | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 15 |
| FEMALE 2 | Passive Communication Style | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 15 |
| FEMALE 3 | Assertive Communication Style | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 16 |
| FEMALE 4 | Passive Communication Style | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| FEMALE 5 | Passive-Aggressive Communication Style | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 13 |
| FEMALE 6 | Passive-Aggressive Communication Style | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 14 |
| FEMALE 7 | Assertive Communication Style | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 15 |
| FEMALE 8 | Assertive Communication Style | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 14 |
| FEMALE 9 | Passive-Aggressive Communication Style | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 12 |
| FEMALE 10 | Passive-Aggressive Communication Style | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 14 |

Table Explanation : P : Pronunciation
 G : Grammar
 V : Vocabulary
 F : Fluency

Points Explanation : 15/15+ : Good
 -15 : Bad

From the data above 3/4 male students that use assertive communication have a good speaking ability based on the results of the speaking test. All male students that used passive communication style have a bad speaking ability. On the other hand, 1 male undergraduate student that use passive-aggressive communication style have a good speaking ability while 1 undergraduate student that use aggressive communication style have a bad speaking ability.

On the other hand, all female undergraduate students that use assertive communication styles have a good speaking ability, their total score is around 15-16 points. 2 female undergraduate students that use passive-aggressive communication style have a good speaking ability. Both of 2 female undergraduate students that use passive communication styles got 13 of total points in speaking test which means that they have a bad speaking ability.

B. Discussion

The communication used by male and female undergraduate students

Assertive communication style is dominant between male undergraduate students. They tend to use assertive pattern and behavior when they communicate and speak. When it comes to giving and describing idea or opinion most of male undergraduate students are often to do it, the male undergraduate students are not afraid to make an eye contact, they also talk to the point rather than small talk. Men tend to communicate in a more assertive manner compared to women (Timko, 2017).

While female undergraduate students is mostly used passive-aggressive patterns and behavior to communicate and speak. They mostly feel unconfident and shy to make an eye-contact, they also confuse when presenting their thought or idea on something. If male undergraduate students do not prefer small talk, female undergraduate students is tend to do small talk rather than talk to the point, this is the opposite side of male undergraduate students behavior, female undergraduate students are often use sarcasm when they communicate and them claimed that they often talk behind.

The patterns and behavior of female undergraduate students above are the characteristic of passive-aggressive communication style. It proves that passive-aggressive communication style is dominant between female undergraduate students. On the other hand, assertive communication style is mostly used by male undergraduate students. Males are often associated with traits of aggressiveness and assertiveness, while females are commonly linked to traits of passivity and passive-aggressiveness (Ramachandiran & Mahmud, 2019).

The effect of communication styles used by male and female undergraduate students on their speaking ability in public speaking course.

The undergraduate students that used assertive communication style have a good communication style rather than other communication style. From the total of 8/20 students that used assertive communication style they have a good speaking ability rather than others, it proves that assertive communication style is effective to get a good speaking ability. The main aspects that influence it is the behavior, patterns and characteristics of assertive communication style. One of the patterns of assertive communication style is that they tend to express their feeling or idea that makes them confident to speak in front of others.

According to Mia Belle Frothingham (2023), assertive communication is a form of communication in which individuals articulate their thoughts, emotions, and requirements in a respectful, confident, and straightforward manner. It highlights the importance of mutual comprehension, upholds the rights of others while safeguarding personal limits, and fosters transparent, sincere, and productive discussions.

On the other hand, undergraduate students that used passive-aggressive style have a bad speaking ability, only 1 undergraduate students that used passive-aggressive communication style have a good speaking ability. The difficulty of this communication style in expressing their thought is make people that used this communication style afraid to speak. They mostly dishonest about their feeling that make tother confuse about what they want and what they needs.

CONCLUSION

The communication styles used by male undergraduate students is dominant by assertive communication style, the second communication style that mostly used by male undergraduate students is passive communication style, while aggressive and passive-aggressive communication style are rarely used by male undergraduate students. On the other hand, passive-aggressive communication style is commonly used by female undergraduate students, assertive communication style is the second communication style that mostly used by female undergraduate students. While, passive and aggressive communication style are rarely used by female undergraduate students.

Male and female undergraduate students that used assertive communication style are tend to have a good speaking ability in public speaking course. While male and female undergraduate students that used passive communication style are have a bad speaking ability. The assertive communication style students mostly got 15-16 points in speaking ability test while passive communication style students are mostly got 12-14 points in speaking ability test.

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