

GENDER REPRESENTATION IN TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION IN SOCIOLOGY LEARNING: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine gender representation in teacher- student interactions during Sociology learning at the secondary school level using Sara Mills' Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach. In the educational context, verbal and nonverbal interactions between teachers and students play a significant role in shaping social identities, including gender identity. The results of the study indicate that in learning practices, teachers still tend to reproduce gender stereotypes implicitly and explicitly, such as associating men with leadership and rationality, and women with affection, appearance, and domestic duties. Data collection was conducted by analyzing Sociology learning videos uploaded on TikTok social media. It was found that the language used by teachers is not neutral, but rather laden with patriarchal ideology that reinforces traditional gender roles. This hinders the function of education as a means of social liberation. Therefore , critical reflection and gender-based teacher training are needed so that Sociology learning can become a just and transformative space. This study contributes theoretical and practical insights in building gender-equal classroom interactions, while strengthening the role of education in creating a more just and inclusive society.

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INTRODUCTIONS

Education is a crucial arena in the process of socialization and identity formation, including gender identity. Schools are not only a place for the transfer of knowledge but also play a role in transmitting social and cultural values that develop within society. In this context, the interaction between teachers and students becomes a discursive space that is not neutral, but rather laden with ideology, including gender ideology (Taylor, 2021). Through the learning process, particularly in Sociology subjects that discuss social structures and dynamics, power relations, and social construction, existing gender stereotypes and biases in society can be reinforced and deconstructed (Rhamadina et al., 2023).

Gender representation in education is not a new issue. However, many interaction patterns are still found that demonstrate gender inequality, both explicitly and implicitly (Rashidi & Naderi, 2012). For example, teachers often focus more on logical and scientific reasoning for male students, while female students are more focused on affective and moral aspects. These patterns can shape students' views of the "appropriate" social roles for men and women, reinforcing patriarchal structures in society. This suggests that teacher-student interactions are a crucial medium for reproducing dominant gender discourses (Hassaskhah & Zamir, 2013) .

Sociology learning offers significant potential for fostering critical awareness in students about social issues, including gender equality. However, the irony of the learning process is that it unconsciously reproduces gender bias (Maghfur, 2021). Therefore, it is crucial to analyze how gender representations are constructed and reconstituted in educational practices, particularly in verbal and nonverbal communication between teachers and students in the classroom (Glock et al., 2024).

Discourse analysis is a relevant approach to understanding the construction of social events that occur in everyday life, including in educational interactions. According to Fairclough (1995), language is not only a means of communication, but also a practice of social structures that shape and are shaped by those social structures. In the educational context, the language used by teachers and students can reflect and shape power relations and ideological values, including views on gender. Using a critical discourse analysis approach , it can be revealed how gender representations are shaped through speech, questions, assessments, and responses by teachers and students (Duffy et al., 2001; Malik et al., 2022).

This research is important because there is still little research specifically exploring gender representation in the context of Sociology learning in schools. Sociology subjects are unique in addressing themes closely related to social justice issues, including gender equity. However, the extent to which Sociology learning can foster critical awareness of gender issues depends largely on how teachers manage classroom interactions. As educational agents, teachers play a strategic role in determining the direction and meaning of the learning process, including shaping gender discourse that is accepted and interpreted by students (Duffy et al., 2001).

Furthermore, understanding gender representation in teacher-student interactions can form the basis for formulating more inclusive and equitable educational strategies. Education should be a tool for emancipating students from the social constraints they potentially create based on gender. If educational practices continue to maintain implicit gender bias, the goal of creating a just and equal society will be difficult to achieve (Tandaju, 2022).

Therefore, this study aims to critically examine how gender representations emerge in interactions between teachers and students during Sociology lessons. This research attempts to analyze the forms of gender representation in learning practices and how these practices reflect, maintain, or even challenge structures of social inequality. Through a discourse analysis approach, this research is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions to the development of education that is more responsive to gender issues, particularly at the high school level.

By exploring discursive practices in the classroom, this research aims not only to uncover biased interaction patterns but also to create a space for reflection for educators in developing more gender-equitable classrooms. Ultimately, education that critically considers gender representation will be a crucial foundation for developing a generation with social awareness and a commitment to values of justice.

METHOD

The research was conducted using a qualitative research approach in the form of a critical discourse analysis method. from Sara Mills. By using Through critical discourse analysis, researchers can examine how gender representations are produced, maintained, or contested, while exploring the power and ideological implications of these representations. The analysis focuses on linguistic aspects and the contexts associated with them.

The data collection process is carried out by collecting relevant mass media text samples, researchers take news samples from social media content. highlight or reflect certain gender representations. These samples will then be analyzed in depth using discourse analysis methods .

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

RESULTS

Sociology learning should be a space for dissecting and deconstructing social constructs, including gender roles and representations in society. However, based on researchers' observations of social media content, particularly TikTok, they found that interactions between teachers and students during Sociology lessons often reinforce implicit and explicit gender stereotypes and biases. This analysis was conducted on several video clips uploaded by teachers and students, depicting real-life classroom situations, both in the form of simulations and live documentation.

Gender and Leadership

In a 2-minute 25-second learning video uploaded by the TikTok account *@classSociology21*, the teacher discusses the topic of "Leadership" in Traditional and Modern Societies." During *the group sharing*, the teacher said:

"Group 1 is led by Fahri. Yes, you are suitable to be the leader. Boys should learn to be leaders from school."
Meanwhile, to a female student, the teacher said:
"Dina, help me organize it. Notes and reports, okay? You're the most thorough."

This statement conveys a strong message about gender roles: men are expected to be leaders, while women are assigned to administrative or support roles. In fact, in Sociology lessons, students should be encouraged to critically question these roles.

Gender and Emotions

In another video from the *@sosial_masyarakat.id* account, a teacher delivers material on "The Family as an Agent of Socialization." He says:

"That is why, in the family, the mother is the center of emotions and feelings. Fathers are usually more assertive. Women are gentler, men are stronger."

The male student answered in a gentle tone. Then the teacher answered with:

"Oh, why? You said you were fine, just like a woman."

This response directly demonstrates how rigid gender traits are embedded, suggesting that being male means being assertive, tough, and unemotional. This attitude creates psychological limitations for students in expressing themselves freely.

Gender and Appearance

In another video uploaded by the account *@sekolahmerdeka21*, the teacher can be seen commenting on the clothes of the students who were attending the presentation:

"Wow, Dita looks so neat on stage, I thought that women would pay more attention to their appearance."

But when a student came onto the stage with his clothes untucked, the teacher simply responded casually:

"He's a man, what matters is the content."

This comment demonstrates how gender double standards continue to be perpetuated. Female students are more pressured to perform on stage, while male students are given more leeway. This indirectly instills the idea that women are judged by their appearance, while men are judged by their intellectual capacity or competence.

Gender and Discussion Topics

In the video that In a video uploaded by the account *@mySociologyclass*, the teacher raised the topic of "Gender Inequality in the Workplace." When a student expressed a critical opinion about the need for equal pay, the teacher interrupted:

"Wow, that's really critical. But don't forget, women still have primary responsibilities at home."

This statement not only silenced the students' critical arguments but also reinforced the view that women's nature lies in the domestic sphere. On the other hand, when the students stated that men can also take care of children and the home, the teachers simply laughed and said:

"If you say that, it's better for men not to have wives."

Responses like this show how even joking comments can become a means of reproducing patriarchal ideology that limits students' space for actualization .

Gender in Word Choice

In another section, the teacher who discussed the role of mass media said:

“Women are more vulnerable to falling victim to advertising, because they are more emotional and easily tempted to shop.”

In front of the class, this statement was met with laughter from the male students. Meanwhile , The students seemed silent. While seemingly lighthearted, this statement demonstrates how classrooms create limiting, judgmental social norms that reinforce the image of women as emotional and consumerist, not rational.

Some of the teacher's statements above may have been delivered without any discriminatory intent. However, in the context of sociology learning , each statement has an impact on identity formation. The language teachers use becomes an ideological tool that shapes students' understanding of the social world. If teachers consistently attribute leadership, courage, and rationality to males, and obedience, emotion, and precision to females, the classroom becomes a vehicle for the reproduction of structural inequality.

Even though some learning materials are normative and address gender equality issues, if they are not delivered in a manner that is accompanied by critical reflection from educators, they can be counterproductive. This aligns with a phenomenon also discussed in social media content by a National Commission on Violence Against Women Commissioner, who explained how victims of sexual violence are often blamed for being in a private space when the incident occurred. In her narrative , said :

"If it happens in a woman's room, it's assumed the woman invited it. But if it happens in a man's room, the woman is also at fault because 'why' did she go into the man's room? So the man is never at fault."

This narrative demonstrates how patriarchal ideology is embedded in society's way of thinking. This aligns with what happens in the classroom: students not only learn theory, but also absorb the teacher's perspectives and methodological values directly.

The results of this study indicate that in teacher-student interactions during Sociology lessons, gender representation is not only evident in the content of the lesson but also strongly reflected in word choice, praise, assignment distribution, and even humor. Teachers are often unaware of the reproduction of gender-biased values and the neglect of individual student potential.

In an ideal educational context, the classroom should be a place where students feel free from limiting social labels. Therefore, it is necessary to increase teachers' capacity to understand gender issues comprehensively, so that Sociology learning can truly become a means of liberation and the formation of an equal society.

Discussion

Sociology learning should ideally serve as a reflective space capable of dismantling the construction of social inequality, including gender. However, an analysis of several Sociology learning videos uploaded to social media, such as TikTok, shows that classrooms actually serve as a means of reproducing gender stereotypes. In interactions between teachers and students, a clear division of gender roles is evident, not based on individual capacity, but on sociocultural assumptions.

In a video about leadership, teachers appoint male students as leaders because "boys should learn to lead from school," and assign female students administrative duties. This representation reflects what Connell (2021) critiques as a form of hegemonic masculinity, in which men are automatically associated with power and dominance, while women are assigned supporting roles. This contradicts the principles of Critical Sociology, which should challenge unjust structures and norms (Apple, 2019).

A similar situation occurs in the context of emotions. When students speak softly, they are ridiculed for not conforming to constructs of masculinity. Teachers unwittingly become agents of gender policing , a social mechanism that regulates how men and women should behave (Pascoe, 2023). In social psychology studies, such actions limit

men's emotional expression and reinforce the myth that only women are allowed to be emotional (Eagly & Wood, 2018).

Teachers' statements about appearance also indicate gender expectations. Unbalanced. Female students are judged on neatness and aesthetics, while male students are judged on content or substance. This is an example of a double standard, where women and men are judged differently, even though they are in the same context. According to Ridgeway (2019), these standards form a symbolic hierarchy that is difficult to eradicate if it is continuously reproduced in social spaces, such as the classroom.

Statements that silence critical voices when discussing gender inequality in the workplace are further evidence of how teachers, consciously or unconsciously, reinforce patriarchal ideology. The view that women still have "primary responsibilities at home" reflects gender essentialism, the belief that gender differences are natural and unchangeable (Fine, 2019). This is highly problematic because it contradicts the values of equality and inclusivity that should be upheld in education.

Another important aspect that emerged in the data was the use of language. When teachers mentioned that women are more vulnerable to advertising because they are emotional, this indirectly resulted in social labels that marginalize women. This type of discourse contributes to the discursive construction of gender, where language becomes a primary means of shaping and maintaining gender inequality (Lazar, 2020). According to Fairclough (2015), language in educational practice is not a neutral tool, but rather an ideological one.

In the context of critical discourse analysis (CDA), as explained by Norman Fairclough and emphasized by Van Dijk (2021), language practices in education must be seen as part of a power structure. When teachers repeatedly reproduce stereotypes and traditional gender roles through everyday interactions, the educational process becomes a mechanism for reproducing social inequality.

In fact, as Hooks (2020) points out, education should free students from systemic shackles, including oppressive gender systems. Sociology learning, in particular, has great potential to be a tool for social transformation if accompanied by critical reflection, participatory dialogue, and the courage to challenge outdated norms.

Unfortunately, the teachers in these videos have not yet demonstrated the capacity to address gender issues in depth and reflectively. This highlights the urgent need for gender mainstreaming in teacher training. According to Nurhayati's (2022) research, teacher training that comprehensively integrates a gender perspective has been shown to increase teacher sensitivity in delivering material and foster more equal interactions in the classroom.

From the overall findings, it can be concluded that gender representation in teacher-student interactions during Sociology lessons is still far from the principle of equality. Language, humor, task allocation, and forms of praise are used unconsciously to maintain patriarchal norms. This poses a serious challenge to education, as if left unchecked, classrooms will continue to reproduce gender inequality, rather than becoming agents of emancipatory social change.

CONCLUSION

The research findings confirm that Sociology learning in the classroom is not entirely free from gender bias and stereotypes. Interactions between teachers and students, as depicted in various video clips on social media, show that gender roles are often reproduced unconsciously through language, role assignments, and responses to student expressions. Representations of men as leaders, strong, and rational; Meanwhile, women as supportive, emotional and obedient figures reflect the strong patriarchal ideology that is still rooted in educational practices.

In fact, sociology education should be a critical tool for deconstructing inequality. Therefore, in-depth reflection and gender-sensitive training are needed for educators so that classroom interactions can foster critical and creative awareness that is equitable for all gender identities. Thus, education can become an instrument of social transformation toward a more equal and inclusive society.

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