

LANGUAGE & INTERACTION

The aim of this book is to determine if there exists an inequality between Muslim and non-Muslim husbands and wives, which is exhibited through the amount and types of interruption that occur in their conversation. The scope of this book will include linguistic features of interruption and their possible interpretations within the context of equity between the husband and wife. A comparison will be made of the features of the conversation between Indonesian Muslim and non-Muslim couples who have been residents in Australia for a maximum of 2 years.

LANGUAGE & INTERACTION

THE TYPE AND AMOUNT OF INTERRUPTION IN THE CONVERSATION
OF INDONESIAN HUSBAND AND WIVES

Language and Interaction:
The type and amount of interruption
in the conversation of Indonesian husbands and wives

NONNY BASALAMA



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As a muslim woman studying language and gender, I have become aware that language is a product of culture and that it grows alongside of the culture. Studying language can reveal the power relationships that exist within a culture. It is my aim to investigate my own culture via the language that it uses. While this has been done in western cultures, it has largely been ignored in Indonesia.

The aim of this book is to determine if there exists an inequality between Muslim and non-Muslim husbands and wives, which is exhibited through the amount and types of interruption that occur in their conversation. The scope of this book will include linguistic features of interruption and their possible interpretations within the context of equity between the husband and wife. A comparison will be made of the features of the conversation between Indonesian Muslim and non-Muslim couples who have been residents in Australia for a maximum of 2 years.

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CHAPTER 2

GENERAL BACKGROUND OF LANGUAGE AND GENDER STUDIES

Language and gender studies in Asia were completed by missionaries, explorers and European scholars in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These early descriptions, coming under the headings of anthropology or linguistics, tended to differentiate between languages with gender, and languages where women and men spoke differently, a phenomenon which seemed to take these early “linguists” entirely by surprise (Bodine 1975). Languages with gender are common in Europe, so gender relating to grammar had already been explored, however, languages where men and women spoke differently were novel, and popular subjects for discourse.

Sex differentiation in language has been treated differently as interest in the area grew. Among the first linguists to address the topic were Van Ginneken (1913) and Otto Jespersen (1922). They described the differences between men and women

they saw, concentrating on lexical and syntactic features. They claimed that women had a simple language structure, used sweet and chaste words and were extremely talkative – women were chatty by nature (Brouwer 1989). Neither was working within a rigid linguistic theory. They simply wrote what was intuitive at the time. Explanations for these differences were supposed to be biological in accordance with biological theories at the time.

It is fair to say that Jespersen (1922) probably initiated much of the interest in language differences between men and women with his influential work *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin* (Thorne and Henley 1975:6). This work, in which he reinforces extant stereotypes, describes women using incomplete sentences to communicate, while men complete their utterances. According to Jespersen, women speak more quickly than men, and do not share the same pedantry for words. This sentiment survived for over thirty years. It was repeated by Theodor Reik in 1954 (Swacker 1973:76). The literature written during this time treated the subject as a curiosity not worth any serious attention (Thorne and Henley, 1975:6).

All commentary on the topic of language difference between genders was written by men until two female linguists published their own views, Key in 1972 and Lakoff in 1973. This commentary was

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different in a number of ways and it provided a critical look at language differences from a woman's point of view. These women were feminists which altered the focus of the criticism. The source of the differences identified was deemed to be social rather than biological (Brouwer 1989:5). Lakoff's study in the early 1970's is rather more well known than Key's, and she is generally regarded as the one who blazed a trail for other feminist linguists. Like Jespersen she argued from intuition and casual observation. She also echoed Jespersen's claim that there were syntactical and lexical differences to women's speech (Cameron 1995). However, Lakoff argued that these differences were due to the socialisation of women, not their inherent biology. Essentially, there were differences in the speech of men and women because women had been trained from birth to speak a language that reflected and reinforced their subordinate position (Lakoff 1975).

Lakoff initiated the interest in the study of language and gender in the nineteen seventies. In her book, 'Language and Women's Place', she argued that the way women use language reflects their inferior position in society (1975), and her work has had a great influence on subsequent studies of language and gender. Zimmerman and West 1975, Tannen 1984, Coates and Cameron 1988, Brouwer, 1989, Tannen 1990, Coates 1998, have used Lakoff's research as a foundation for their own studies.

Lakoff comments on the position of women in society in the late sixties. She talks about the words available to women when expressing themselves, the words used to describe women, and how this must affect the way women relate to the world and how the world sees them. She explained that there is a disparity between women's language and the language used by men in political and cultural terms that posit women in an inferior position in society. For example, she describes ways in which women are more polite than men, with particular reference to the way they ask questions (Lakoff 1975:18). This is best demonstrated by the following examples taken from Lakoff:

1. Close the door.
2. Please close the door.

These are both commands, the second command is a polite form of the first. According to Lakoff, women are more likely to use the second form rather than the first.

As for the second group of sentences:

1. Will you close the door?
2. Will you please close the door?
3. Won't you close the door? (In Lakoff, 1975:18)

These are requests that leave the decision to close the door with the listener. Each sentence here is more polite as we move down the list, with "Won't

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you please close the door?" preempting a refusal to cooperate and leaving the listener much freer to refuse than do the first two requests. Lakoff has noted that the more polite versions of these sentences (leaving the listener freer to refuse to close the door) are the versions most often used by women, and not used by men at all. The question here is why do men not ask questions this way? Based on her discussion and observations, which were primarily of white middle-class women, Lakoff claimed that this was a manifestation of the assumption that men are generally more powerful than women.

While Lakoff defined the language used by the women as the language of powerlessness in the late sixties, Deborah Tannen speaks of some of the difficulties women face in the eighties and nineties (Tannen 1984, 1990). That these different eras of Lakoff and Tannen mark some dramatic changes in women's position, at least in the western world, means that some of the situations described by Lakoff are no longer relevant. For example, it is now common to refer to a female academic by her last name only, it was not at the time when Lakoff wrote. As a consequence, studies change as the political climate changes - the findings of the studies and the political climate subtly affect each other. With interest in the subject re-ignited, it became evident that the commentary published thus far had

been based on introspective examination (Brouwer 1989:5). The need for empirical data to support the linguistic theories presented by the different parties was required. Initially there were small experiments to test the statements made about vocabulary and sentence structure. The results were often contradictory to stereotypical expectations. Other examples of contradictory studies are: Dubois and Crouch (1975), Crosby and Nyquist (1977), where language use was linked to situation and status, and Brouwer, Gerritsen and De Haan (1979), Brouwer (1982), where language differences were related to the sex of the addressee rather than the sex of the speaker. Brouwer (1989) notes that not one single study has supported the suggestion that women talk more. In fact, the few studies that have been done have shown that men talk more often and for longer than women (Swacker 1973). Further studies revealed that there was indeed a power difference reflected by language use. The evidence was inadvertently found when the analysis moved “up” one level and began to concentrate on the structure of the conversation rather than the individual sentences. Brouwer (1989:6) cites at least four studies (Zimmerman and west 1975, Fishman 1983, Brown and Levinson 1978, and Holmes 1987) that have shown men dominating women in conversation by interrupting them and ignoring topics they raise. Fishman's (1983) major finding was that women asked more questions than men, and her finding has

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been often reproduced. She argues that ‘female stylistic’ features are not part of a woman’s general conversational style, but reflect the context in which she is interacting. Fishman claims that women ask more questions than men, because women in conversation with male superordinates are often placed in the position of having to take responsibility for smooth interpersonal relations. Fishman called this ‘interactional shitwork’, a name that seems to have stuck. It can be argued that asking questions more often is not an indication of insecurity on behalf of the woman but a means for her to assert some sort of control in a situation where she is powerless (Cameron 1995:25). From the intuitive statements of the seventies came the empirical studies of the eighties, however, a study on conversation and gender can not help but be subjective. There were, and still are problems with techniques and consistency that continue to be debated today.

There has been an increasing amount of interest in the way men and women interact since women’s liberation in the mid-nineteen seventies. Study on the subject has grown from subjective intuition to empirical investigation that has proved wrong most of the theories derived from ‘folk linguistics’:

“There is now convincing evidence that many of our folk linguistic

beliefs are false. For example, the notion that women are chatterboxes has not survived scrutiny: research in a range of different social contexts - in the workplace, in the classrooms, in television discussion programs, in electronic discussions via computer, for example has revealed that in mixed groups male speakers talk more than female speakers." (Coates 1998:2).

In the 1990's interest has grown in the social and cultural areas of language use between genders, and it has become increasingly apparent that the reason women have been compared unfavourably to men is that it has always been assumed that the male behaviour was the norm (Coates 1986). This has led to a split in the study of sociolinguistics, along a line that separates a dominance theory and a difference approach. Coates describes the dominance approach as a way to view women as an oppressed group. This leads to the researchers interpreting all data in terms of men's dominance and women's subordination. "Doing power' is often a way of 'doing gender' too." (West and Zimmerman, 1983). It is generally believed by people subscribing to the dominance theory that both men and women perpetuate the power structure that keeps men dominant and women subordinate. The difference

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approach, however, subscribes to the idea that the world of men and women are two different subcultures. Women are demanding recognition of their different experience of work, love, and family (Humm 1989:51). As far as a sociolinguist is concerned, the differences in men and women's speech simply reflect the maintenance of these subcultures. It is Coates' s opinion that both approaches can yield valuable insight into the nature of gender difference in language use (Coates 1998). Some of the most useful insights have come from studies of adults in single sex groups. Sociolinguists are now interested in how people deal with different gender interactions (Tannen 1990).

This background has so far only treated the development of gender and language studies in western societies. The focus of this study is not western culture, but rather Indonesia culture. It should be noted that though language and gender studies have progressed to this point in western countries, in South East Asia this is not the case. As far as gender based language studies in non-western countries are concerned, it is difficult to find material that does not date from times of colonial exploration. The few studies that do exist seem to be primarily anthropological and only treat gender differences where they occur in pronunciation, morphological or lexical variation e.g. Bodine 1975 and Van der Post 1978 (Brouwer 1989). The

sociolinguistic analysis of language in gender interaction in South East Asia, where the subjects for this study originate, is still in its infancy. The sociolinguistic literature available may not be relevant in an Indonesian context, and this should be carefully kept in mind by the researcher when applying western sociolinguistic methods in the analysis. However, it is hoped that this book will shed some light on whether current analytical methods can produce relevant data for this culture, and whether gender differences can span different languages and cultural groups.

A. The Study of Interruption

Studies of interruption are particularly interesting, as interruption is associated with domineering behaviour, hence is linked to power issues between two speakers. Among the researchers who have concentrated on interruption are Zimmerman and West (1975), Ferguson (1977), Octigan and Niederman (1979), Beattie (1981) and (1982), West, (1983), Petterson (1986), Roger and Nesshover (1987), Muray and Covely (1988), Goldberg (1990), James and Clarke (1993), Nohara (1992), De Francisco (1998). There is a certain amount of discrepancy between these researchers with regard to how interruption should be defined and how it should be measured. This topic is covered in more detail in the section, How Interruption is Defined. The studies are often undertaken with a new set of

parameters each time and this leads to conflicting results. Joan Swann's criticism of Beattie is a case in point, "At least one reason why Beattie's (1981) results may differ from Zimmerman and West is that Beattie used different criteria to identify interruptions" (Swann 1988). This makes it difficult to determine from the data, whether the results indicate dominance of one speaker over another. To determine that it is no longer worth pursuing the link between dominance and interruption there must be firmly established parameters and repeated studies using those parameters – the study of interruption is in it's infancy in this respect.

B. Special Considerations for Undertaking an Interruption Study in Indonesia

Undertaking an interruption study in Indonesia using western models has it's own problems. The same data may indicate completely different results when cultural values are taken into consideration. The initial decision to undertake such a study came about when the researcher was reading Lakoff (1975), and looking for similar examples of language use in her native Indonesia. Taking into account the dramatically different languages, there were indeed parallels. For example the forms of polite requests described above (Lakoff 1975) are also found in Indonesia in accord with the researcher's personal experience. Women are expected to be polite when they request help or ask for information and usually

a women must use a form of expression more polite than men, especially when they speak with their husband. However, a husband is not required to be as polite to his wife. (Personal communication with 4 Indonesian wives in Australia, May 1999). This, among other numerous examples inspired the researcher to investigate the Indonesian situation formally. Interruption was chosen for it's close links with dominance. As there have been few studies on language and gender in Indonesia, this study result will serve as a pilot study and hopefully will precede more intensive investigation.

a. Indonesian Culture

It is vital when analyzing the data from this book, that the special aspects of Indonesian culture be taken into account. It would not be wise to attribute to Indonesians the same idiosyncrasies typical of westerners who have previously been the subjects of interruption studies. This section includes an Indonesian cultural background and contrasts it with the aspects of western culture relevant to the study of interruption.

Hofstede in his book 'Culture and Organization: Software of the Mind' classifies Indonesia as one of the Asian countries having four dimensions of cultural values which are contradictory to other

western countries such as Australia, USA, Netherlands, etc. (1984). He specifies the four dimensions of cultural values as follows:

- Low individualism or collectivism vs. high individualism
- High power distance or authoritarian vs. low power distance or egalitarian
- Low uncertainty avoidance or tolerate uncertainty vs. high uncertainty avoidance or need certainty
- High masculinity vs. low masculinity

Each of these classifications has been summarised in Table 1 below.

Low Individualism	High Individualism
People belong to ingroups who look after them in exchange for loyalty	People look after themselves and immediate family
The emphasis is on “we” and belonging to groups	The emphasis is on “I” and individual’s initiative and achievement
Particularistic, apply different value standards for members of ingroups and outgroups	Universalistic, apply the same value standard to all
Low Power Distance	High Power Distance
Believe power should be used only when it is legitimate and/or based on expertise Attention to myth of equality	See power as a basic fact in society Superiors consider their subordinates to

among superiors and subordinates	be different from themselves
Parents may value initiative and independence among (older) children Students relatively independent and anti-authoritarian	Parents value obedience in children Students value conformity and display authoritarian attitudes
See respect for individual and equality as directly linked to freedom	See tact, servitude and money as directly linked to freedom
Low Uncertainty Avoidance	High Uncertainty Avoidance
Tend to less public display of emotion, aggression, tension, reflecting lower levels of anxiety and stress	Tend to greater public displays of emotion, aggression, tension, reflecting higher levels of anxiety and stress
Less need for formal (written) rules	Greater need for formal rules
Higher tolerance of ambiguous situations and dissenting viewpoints	Less tolerance for people or groups with deviant ideas or behaviors
Accept creative potential of conflict Accept competition as public ideology	Avoid open conflict in public Disapprove of competition as public ideology
Low Masculinity	High Masculinity

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Place value on people, quality of life and nurturance, service, interdependence	Place high values on things, power and assertiveness, performance, ambition, independence
Value overlapping gender roles Men as well as women may value what is small, weak, needy	Emphasise differentiated sex role Successful women copy masculine roles
View interpersonal relationships as central to life	View work as more central to life Accept work interference in private life

Table 1 - From Hofstede 1991, adapted from Communication and Culture course materials given in semester 1, 1999.

Indonesia, according to Hofstede is classified as a collectivist, high power distance (HPD), low uncertainty avoidance and high masculinity culture. These four culture values are manifested in characteristics that people are taught are central to belonging to a group. The keyword is 'we' which is always emphasized over the individual and there are harmony values that have to be maintained. Authority is regarded highly in this society where it is taken for granted that some people have more power

than others. Seeing power as a basic fact, people who are more superior will consider their subordinate to be different from themselves (hierarchically). They also tend to avoid displaying emotions in public. Indonesians emphasize the masculinity in their society and sex roles are highly differentiated.

Hofstede's classification for Indonesia as a high power distance culture has support. An article published in the *Warta Aquila* Newspaper entitled "Melihat Indonesia dari kaca mata luar negeri" (1999:16,20) noted that Indonesians place more focus on rank, hierarchy and status. For example, in the work place, an Indonesian employee will frequently consult with a superior before completing an action whether or not the consultation is required. This could be misinterpreted by a westerner, who might perceive that the employee had a good working relationship with their employer or however, it may alternatively be interpreted as a lack of competency on the part of the employee to make decision without consultation. Actually, this is not the case, in a hierarchical society such as Indonesia, this kind of relationship emphasizes a power distance between the two people. For example, in countries that have low power distance (LPD) relationship such as USA, Australia, Great Britain, etc. it is common for a

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cleaning service to say, “Good morning, how are you?” to an employer. It would also not be surprising if the employer responded in kind. This kind of relationship is still rare in Indonesia. This sort of communication would indicate a lack of respect and be impolite.

The high power distance culture in Indonesia must be taken into account when analysing data from an interruption study. For example, it would be ridiculous to classify continuous interruption from a superior as rude in Indonesia. It is culturally acceptable to do so. However, it could be safe to assume that a person who interrupted often was the dominant party in a conversation.

Hall (1976) proposes two terms, high-context communication and low-context communication. High context communication is where most of the information is in either internalized in the person receiving the communication or indicated physically, for example, via body language, while very little is in the verbal part of the message (Hall 1976:79). Low context communication occurs when the majority of information in the message is transmitted verbally, or rather, conveyed strictly via the words in the message (Hall 1976:70). Hall defined cultures according to the forms of

communication he observed. He noted that the majority of people in high context cultures observe high context methods of communication, while people in low context cultures preferred a low context mode of communication. This observation was supported by Levinson (1983) who clarified that "members of low-context, individualistic cultures tend to communicate using direct speech acts, while members of high-context, collectivist cultures tend to communicate using indirect speech acts". Although this has not been the subject of formal investigation, anecdotally, it has been observed that women in Indonesia tend to use more indirect speech in their interactions than the men. This is particularly evident in interactions with male authority figures such as a father, husband or elder brother. Interrupting, by its very nature can be classified as a direct speech act, so if a woman habitually uses indirect speech acts to communicate, she might be expected to interrupt less.

It is interesting to note that countries that are classed by Hofstede as being high power distance are observed by Hall as being high context. This is an important observation as far as analysing data for an interruption study in Indonesia is concerned. Chan (1991) points out

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that Indonesians in their communication style tend to use indirect methods like other East Asian cultures rather than direct methods which are often used by society with low-context communication styles such as USA and Australia. This indirect method of communication can be a good indicator of dominance in an interaction. An employee, for example, will not directly make an objection to his employer but rather express himself so that the employer “saves face”. According to Hofstede, this concept of saving face is a familiar one in Eastern cultures which are collectivist, high power distance cultures. The inferior person in the interaction will generally be indirect in their communication.

This has important implications for husband and wife interactions in collectivist, high power distance, high context cultures. It is possible to hypothesize that given the power distance relationship between men and women in such cultures, this indirect style is generally more often used in communications from the wife to her husband, especially if it is related to a disagreement about something her husband did. This is supported by cultural and religious values that teach the wife to be more tolerant of her husband's feelings because of his position as the leader of the family, i.e. he is generally

given priority by his wife (Berninghausen and Kerstan, 1992).

b. Men as Dominant Figures in Indonesian Families

As there has been little formal study done on the internal politics of the Indonesian family, it is difficult to formally substantiate something that is generally held to be true by the community at large. However, it is possible to draw on a detailed study of the impact of Islam on the lives of women in Java, by Berninghausen and Kerstan. This book allows us to draw comparisons between the women in Java and Indonesian women in general.

Berninghausen and Kerstan conducted a study of Indonesian women in 1992. They were interested in whether a positive change in womens' economic position would bring a rise in their social status. They posed the questions, "Does an improvement of woman's bargaining power lead automatically to more power within the family?" and "What effect does it have on their role in the community?". They studied Javanese women, who according to H. Geertz 1960 and Jay 1969 held some power within the family context, and found that

despite their apparently large role in the decisions made in the family, circumstances still favoured the husband. For example, though the wife controls the family finances, it is the husband who receives an allowance for his own pleasure, and a husband is more likely to have leisure time than his wife, who statistically, works harder and for longer hours. Berninghausen and Kerstan argue that if a wife was truly dominant in the marriage she would not only allocate herself more of the luxuries customarily given to men, but demand that the men be more involved in the practical duties of housework and child-rearing. As this is clearly not the case, according to Berninghausen and Kerstan's data, they have concluded that though Javanese women have a large role in decision making, it does not necessarily give them leave to carry out their own wishes, especially against the wishes of their husbands (Berninghausen and Kerstan, 1992). Extrapolations to all Indonesian women cannot be made from one sole study, however, many of the Javanese values concerning male and female power arise from Islam (Berninghausen and Kerstan, 1992), and 90% of Indonesia is Muslim.

It is worth drawing more detail from Berninghausen and Kerstan's study of 1992, as it was detailed and thorough. They provided some statistics on women's control of material resources in Java. These are summarised below.

- Half the men but only one third of the women owned their own land.
- Women's wages are 25-50% lower than males in the workforce. Women do not have access to responsible positions and where their work is the same as men they are paid less than men.
- The state-sponsored family campaigns are directed only at mothers, not unmarried women. Condoms are disfavoured and sterilisation of men is almost never undertaken. Contraceptives available to women mostly have health risks (IUD's, Injection's of progesterone, the pill). This leads to the conclusion that women do not have ultimate control of their reproductive capacity.
- Despite an attempt by the state to equalise education, women, especially in rural areas and from poor families, fall victim to the custom that boys have the first priority in education.

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- Though women are given apparent free rein with the household income, it is clear that they do not hold any type of power associated with the control, or ownership of wealth. They cannot earn as much or be educated as much as men, less women own land, they do not even have control over their own reproductive capacity. Also, if it is known officially that the wife is infertile, she will have to allow her husband a polygamous marriage. This is supported in Indonesian marriage law (Katjasungkana 1991). Society also reinforces the pressure on the wife to tolerate polygamy so that her husband can rebuild his generation by having children with other women. In contrast, the wife does not have the same rights to children if her husband is infertile.

Berninghausen and Kerstan (1992) have this to say about the way women are viewed in Java. The Javanese do not believe that women have intellectual or creative ability. In accordance with Islam they believe that men are closer to God than women and therefore intellectually superior. They believe that Allah has assigned man the role of planner and leader, and that a woman's duty revolves around practicalities and daily life. It has been pointed out that

Islam declares all people equal before God, however, Islamic men have assigned women an inferior position on earth. Islam has been interpreted to mean that Motherhood is the natural destiny and obligation of all women. Single mothers are severely discriminated against, which is a reflection of the moral ties that bind women to marriage.

This leads us to the issue of women's control over their sexuality. Berninghausen and Kerstan found that Islamic values apply to the different sexual standards expected of women and men. In Javanese society there are only two roles available for women, the wife and mother or the whore (a women with no morals restricting her interactions with men, not necessarily a prostitute). This is a direct result of the fact that premarital sex is strictly forbidden for women. For men, it is also forbidden but it is practised and either forgiven or overlooked. For a women to be accepted in society as a good wife and mother she must follow a dress code, remain at home in the evening, and marry one person to whom she must be faithful for the rest of her life. It does not follow from this description that a Javanese woman is in control over her sexuality. She is, to a certain extent. She may choose to be a good woman or a whore,

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however, there is no grey area for Javanese women. Restricting women's movement is one of the limitations to being a good wife and mother in Java. During the day, there is almost no restriction on their movement. However, there are certain rules that must be adhered to after dark, rules, needless to say, that do not apply to Javanese men. Women are not allowed out of the house after dark unless accompanied by a male member of the family or part of a large group, perhaps as part of formally controlled celebrations or ceremonies.

The following quote from Berninghausen and Kerstan (1992) sums up the status of Javanese wives in their own houses. "While Javanese men are guaranteed a certain amount of status simply by virtue of their masculinity, women's status is measured by the extent to which they are able to use the sphere of activities given them. Women have to work for their position of power. Their influence is measured by their economic activism, their commitment to the family and the community. In contrast, men, even if they are on the bottom rung of the social hierarchy, still have the right to their wives' unpaid labour and to be treated preferentially by their wives and their

children.” (Berninghausen and Kerstan, 1992:171).

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Indonesian women have struggled for equal rights and for a more equal participation in public life. Both the improvement in access to education and reforms in the marriage laws can be traced back to the activism of the Indonesian women's movement (Istiadah 1995). Since Indonesian independence was achieved, a few token women have attained positions of authority. However, their number by no means corresponds to the number of women who would be qualified for such jobs as a result of their increased education. The number of women taking part in the government has decreased since the beginning of the republic, however, women who do achieve success are recognised and respected by society (Berninghausen and Kerstan, 1992:167).

As has already been stated, many of the aspects of Javanese culture regarding women have similarities with Islam. Women are regarded as intellectually inferior, unable to make decisions regarding their sexuality and reproductive ability, unable to leave the house after dark without special permission or company as they have to be protected. This

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cultural value not only affects the majority of Indonesian Muslim couples but also couples from other religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity (Murniati, 1993:5-8).

In the Hindu tradition, which is predominant in Bali, an Indonesian island, it is accepted that their way of life comes not only from Hindu's holy book but also from Hindu oral tradition and ritual practice. In Hindu tradition, a woman's status is related to her social status. A woman is seen as a person who brings good luck, because they have periods, and can be a wife, who gives birth and takes care of life. The ideal woman in Hindu is called 'sati'. Sati is a woman who marries and sacrifices herself for her husband. A widow or divorcee is lower than a married woman. The married woman is called sumangali because she brings luck to her husband. She helps her husband to reach the aims of a human being's purpose in life. These are: dharma, which is obligation to his dewa-dewa (similar to a personal God) and his leluhur (ancestors), artha (fertility and richness) and kama (sexual desire). A woman helps him reach all of these aims through good domestic and public performance. To fulfil his obligation to his leluhur he must have children and he cannot do that without his wife. Due to

this function a woman can not be independent because as an ideal woman she has a very great and hard duty and responsibility (in Manual 5.147-148). In social life, the marrying ritual is seen as a sign that the woman will go to heaven. Being a Sumangali dharma (a good wife who helps to fulfil dharma) requires loyalty and full sexual service to a husband. In Hindu tradition, a wife will follow her deceased husband by burning herself. This practise is reinforced by the Hindu religion (Murniati 1993:6). The extreme loyalty expected from a Hindu wife is not required nor expected from the husband. Obviously this places the wife in an inferior position with regard to the power balance in the marriage (Murniati 1993: 5-6).

In Buddhism also, women are seen as objects rather than subjects (Murniati 1993:7). Women are viewed in a functional way, primarily as objects that can be pregnant and give birth. Unlike man, woman can not be a buddha (Although it is argued that this teaching is contradictory to the real Buddhist teaching where all people whether they are men or women can reach buddha). According to Manusmurti, Manu law, the woman's status is dependent and she always answers to an authority figure. Before she is married she will

depend on her father, after marriage, on her husband and when she is old, she will depend on her son.

In the Christian religion, women are placed in an inferior position from the beginning of creation. In Indonesia, the story of creation has survived translation to Bahasa and many other native tongues. Eve (Hawa in Islamic Indonesia, Eva in Christian Indonesia) is still made from Adam and for Adam, and it is Eve who is blamed for the “fall from Eden”. Tradition perpetuates the general belief that men dominate women morally, intellectually and spiritually (Murniati 1993: 8).

C. Interruption and Indonesian Women in Perspective

It is plausible to say that interruption is a good indicator of the power balance in a communication in collectivist, high power distance, high context cultures. It is now necessary to inspect the probable power balance in the average Indonesian home in order to justify using interruption as an indicator of dominance in this book on communication between Indonesian husbands and wives.

In an Indonesian husband and wife relationship, it is the man who is the head of the family, and has a dominant role. This is stated by Manderson (1980)

Williams (1990), Berninghausen and Kerstan (1992), Murniati (1993), Wajidi (1993), Wolf (1992), Noerhadi (1993), Mangunwijaya(1993), and Istiadah (1995). Istiadah (1995) discusses this from an Islamic point of view. She points out that in Islam women are considered inferior to men and therefore must be protected by their father, brother, or husband. She provided evidence that the Indonesian Government supports the Islamic view through the 1974 marriage law. The law "legalises polygamy and designates men as the heads of the family and women as homemakers" (Istiadah 1995:1). This was reinforced by state guidelines (GBHN) in 1978, in which women were expected to perform a dual role if they had to work outside the family. "Their first priority was their duty to fulfill their essential nature as housewives and the educators of the younger generation" (Katjasungkana 1992:3 cited in Istiadah 1995:10). This is evidence of the Indonesian government's support of the Islamic family model, where women are expected to stay at home and be answerable to the head of the family – their husbands. Even if they are publicly active, their first priority is the support of their husbands and care of their families.

Interruption, which implies power, is not expected from a wife and considered rude because the wife does not, by the rules of the culture, have higher power over her husband. For example, in argument

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with her husband, a wife is not expected to state her argument or opinions directly because it is considered not only impolite but also an expression of lack of respect for her husband who has more authority and power in the family. Many couples now are more democratic because of factors such as education and the modern environment found in big cities in Indonesia, such as Jakarta or Bali. However, it is still the husband who has more power (Williams 1990 and Berninghausen and Kerstan 1992). It is generally accepted that it is the husband's right to show his disagreement by speaking loudly in an argument, or using other non-verbal signals, such as turning away, or leaving the home for a while. The wife, on the other hand, could hardly behave in such ways, which are unacceptable according to Indonesian culture.

Despite this, some people say that a wife is a queen in a household, and the women themselves do not think that they have a subordinate role in the family because they have more power than their husband through the mother's important role (Berninghausen and kerstan 1992:128). For example, from an interview between the researchers and an Indonesian wife:

I am the dominant one in the family, because I'm the one who can deal with everything and make all decisions. My husband doesn't have the slightest idea

about anything. Whenever the kids want something, they always come to me. I'm very satisfied with this, because I get to make all decisions (in Berninghausen and Kerstan 1992:28).

On the surface it seems as though she is the highest authority at home. However, she fails to mention that should her husband veto any of her actions she would have to comply. Her power is given to her by her husband. She is placed in a position to manage the household, but her husband's feelings and authority must always be taken into account. In reality, she does not have power over her husband. Indonesian wives run the household in their husband's interests in much the same way a general manager might run a business for its owner. An Indonesian man described his wife's position in the household as follows: "She's the Finance Minister, I'm the President." (Berninghausen and Kerstan, 1992). The descriptions sometimes given to Indonesian women regarding their status, such as the queen of the household, do not imply dominance over her husband. She wields power in the same way a queen might, she has power over her children and any servants, but her decisions may be overruled at any time by the king of the household – her husband. Even in households where the women contribute to the financial running of the household by working, this fiscal contribution does not affect

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their power status in their own households (Williams 1990).

There are a few aspects of interruption that should be kept in mind when linking interruption to a woman's status in the household. Interruption, which will be discussed in greater detail later, is identified in various ways. Some linguists and researchers consider it to be cooperative (Tannen, 1990) and some say interruption can exert power dominance in conversation (Zimmerman and West 1975). Tannen (1990), in her book "You Just Don't Understand", takes into account cultural differences in her discussion of interruption and applies this to gender interactions. She points out that some cultures think that interruption is a natural action in conversation while this would be considered rude in other cultures. The kind of interruption where both parties are comfortable with interruption is categorized by Tannen as Cooperative Overlapping. The contrast of Cooperative Overlapping is non-overlapping conversation in which it is the height of rudeness to talk while another person is talking. For the majority of Indonesians it is considered rude to interrupt while a person with a higher social status; parents, husband, or boss, are speaking. It is unacceptable for a person to talk when a speaker of older age or higher status has not finished their speech. This cultural view of interruption is important when assessing the role of interruption in

the speech of married couples in Indonesia. It is linked, of course, to the person with the most authority in the household.

Although there has been no empirical research on the issue of language and gender the following is generally held to be true. It is generally considered very impolite for a wife to interrupt her husband, while it is practically normal for a husband to interrupt his wife should he feel the need to do so. This book attempts among other things, to clarify that in Indonesia it is not only age and social status that play an important role in determining communicative manner and interaction style, it is also gender. It is a general rule that women are expected to be more polite than men. For example in a formal situation, such as a conference or staff meeting, interruptions rarely occur, especially by women. In informal situations, such as casual meetings among friends, overlap, turn taking or even interruptions are more common. But even in this situation, females, especially young girls, are not supposed to interrupt since the behaviour is often judged as negative and inappropriate for a female. The same situation occurs within the family, younger members and women are inhibited from breaking into older member's, or men's speech. Dominant people in Indonesia may be defined by seniority or rank, however, simply because Indonesia does not openly make gender distinctions

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does not mean that the distinctions it does make do not have gender biases. Mason (1985 cited in Williams 1990:) claims that "status definitions usually concentrate on aspects of inequality between the sexes, and the inequalities examined tend to be centered around power, prestige and/or resource control or access". Further support for inherent gender inequality in Indonesia comes from Robinson "On the whole, women especially women already married, supported the feminine behaviour which propped up customary kinship based power and a moral order which supported male authority" (Robinson 1998: 75).

There is little doubt where the final power lies in Indonesian households, but whether this is manifest in language or communication is unclear. Bahasa Indonesian makes no linguistic gender distinctions but instead uses titles for seniority or rank that are not necessarily gender focussed. Also in a high context culture like Indonesia, nonverbal communication is more central to communication than it is in low-context cultures and has an important role in defining status. "Like spoken language, body language and other forms of non-verbal behaviour are culture bound" (Irwin 1990: 52). So if dominance is present in Indonesian marriages, it may not necessarily show via the type and amount of interruption that occurs in an everyday communication between husband and

wife. It would be more likely to be present, if at all, during disagreement, however, this sort of data is sensitive and hard to come by.

D. The Patriarchal System in Indonesia

Gender ideology that distinguishes function, position and roles between men and women in society still has a strong presence in Indonesia (Williams 1990, Berninghausen and Kerstan 1992, Istiadah 1995). One negative effect of the ideology of gender is that the patriarchal structure tends to place women in an inferior position. The position of men in this structural system is dominant and this may have roots in culture and religion. This ideology in Indonesia manifests itself in every aspect of life in society including the relationship between women and men in general and a wife and her husband specifically. Traditionally, Indonesians have values that dictate how a woman has to behave in society, in the family, to her husband etc. These values do not only come from cultural background but are also reinforced in religious values. The majority of Indonesians are Muslim (Williams 1990) and this has been influential in maintaining a patriarchal structure (Hassan Rifaat 1991). Women's role in Indonesian Muslim society will be discussed in detail in another section of this chapter. It is important to note that at least in Indonesia the subordinate role of women can also be found where

other religions, such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity are followed (Murniati 1993).

The patriarchal system in Indonesia is not only influenced by culture and religion (Krisnawaty 1993: 161), it is also maintained by the Indonesian Government¹ (Istiadah 1995). Istiadah stated that the state ideology of New Order Government is patriarchal. For example the Government established women's organizations that support and reinforce the patriarchal ideology of the New Order that has placed women as secondary citizens. Moreover, in 1978, GBHN (Indonesia's state guidelines) points out the Government control of women's roles, in which women were expected to perform double roles. "Their first priority was their duty to fulfill their 'essential nature' as housewives and the educators of the younger generation" (Katjasungkana 1992:3, cited in Istiadah 1995:10). However, if they also wanted to work in order to help their family's needs, or to built their career, it was acceptable, as long as it did not interfere with their family duties as a mother and wife. These roles of women are often emphasized in public speeches, statements and within the family (Berninghausen and Kerstan 1992). Krisnawaty(1993) said that the Indonesian women's role tended to be limited to the

¹ The government under Suharto who hold the Indonesian Government from 1965-1998, called the New Order Government.

domestic sphere rather than the public domain where men prevail. So men dominate not only in the family but also in the public domain (Noerhadi 1993, Istiadah 1995).

Polygamy is one of the manifestations of strongly patriarchal societies, in Indonesia's case, polygamy is an indication of the influence of Islam on the society. In 1974, the Indonesian Government legalized 'Polygamy' as well as 'designated' men as the head of the family and women as 'homemakers' (Williams 1990, Berninghausen and Kerstan 1992, Istiadah 1995). However, there were some restrictions on polygamy, it was only allowed if the first wife could not bear children, did not fulfill her duties, or could not because of deformities or incurable physical or mental illness. The man must also show that he is able to financially support the extension to his family and will treat all his wives fairly and the first wife must agree to a multiple marriage. As there had been several cases where a man had made false statements regarding the reason for his multiple marriage without the knowledge of his wife, the law was amended one year later in that it required that the first wife be personally heard. (Berninghausen and Kerstan 1992:42).

Despite this, there are many efforts to struggle against the patriarchal system which began with the late 'Kartini' who is popular as the first feminist in

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Indonesia (Ahmad 1993: 51). Kartini challenged the system from an educational point of view. She claimed that women must be educated because this will change the value system in society. This also will offer many opportunities to Indonesian women to emancipate and to actualize themselves (Hafidz 1993:94). Hafidz states that the strategic action of Kartini resulted in some educated women who later establish modern organizations to continue Kartini's struggle. For example, YASANTI which was later replaced by the New Order Government's women's organisations (Berninghausen and Kerstan 1992, Istiadah 1995, and Robinson1998).

Nursyahbani Katjasungkana at the "Wanita Islam Tekstual dan Kontekstual" (Islamic Women in Text and Context) seminar in Jakarta in 1991, presented more radical points of view in attacking the patriarchal system. She argues that Indonesian Marriage law is patriarchal and tends to generate discriminative policies (Katjasungkana, 1991:8). The Marriage Law assigns men the role of breadwinner. The surat Edaran menteri tenaga kerja No 25-04/Men/88 (a circular from the Ministry of labour) and Peraturan Menteri Pertambangan No 2 /P/M/Pertambangan/1971 (a regulation from the Ministry of Mining) consider that women are not family providers and therefore do not receive a family benefit unless the woman can prove with a formal letter that she is a widow or that her husband

cannot fulfill his function as a breadwinner (Katjasungkana 1991:9). Nursyahbani Katjasungkana also attacks the polygamy law and its regulation. She criticises the courts for allowing polygamy on grounds of infertility without first ensuring that it really is the wife, and not the husband that is infertile. She states that the courts are not protective enough of the first wife, who can be pressured into agreeing to a polygamous marriage. Finally she argues that polygamy is basically inconsistent with Indonesian marriage law which is, “Husband and wife must love and respect each other, be faithful to each other and give mutual help mentally and materially” (Katjasungkana 1991:9).

Despite the written and unwritten inequalities, in 1995 Istiadah argued that Indonesian Muslim women have a great potential to challenge the patriarchal system. Her positive view is based on three things:

1. Indonesian women individually and collectively have been struggling to improve their own position and to challenge the patriarchal system. Writings, biographies and autobiographies of devoted Muslim women indicate that these women have challenged the role prescribed by the official views in Indonesia and orthodox Islam. Muslim women's organisations have

campaigned for consciousness raising and have assisted women to improve their condition.

2. The second aspect that supports her positive viewpoint is the contemporary social, political and economic situation that encourages women's advancement. Women's participation in education and in the work force has increased significantly. Theoretically, improving women's participation in these areas will lead to improving women's bargaining position with men.
3. The emergence of Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia has brought about more liberating discourses on women. This situation provides a great opportunity for women to transform the patriarchal society.

Though some sources state that Indonesian society is predominantly non-patriarchal, the fact that there exist Indonesian feminists belies these claims. Though there are some parts of Indonesia that can claim a matriarchal society, the majority of Indonesia is Islamic, which is a very good indicator of patriarchy for the majority of Indonesia.

E. Religion and Women in Indonesia

a. Christianity in Indonesia

Berninghausen and Kerstan (1992: 40-41) claimed that "The god given superiority of the man over woman is not merely a

characteristic of Islam, the original religious text of Christianity also allow interpretations which discriminate against women. Moreover, Murniati (1993: 8) added that in Christian teaching there are many statements and rules showing how to be a good wife, all of these rules indicate that a wife's position is lower than her husbands. This was found in the Old Testament of the Christian Bible and perpetuated in the New Testament Unfortunately, literature on the effect of Christianity in Indonesia is very limited.

c. Islam and Muslim Women in Indonesia

Islam is the major religion in Indonesia and claims 90% of the Indonesian population. The other 10% consist of religions such as Christian, Buddhism and Hinduism. The Koran, or Qur'an is the primary source of Islam, believed by Muslim to be the word of God conveyed by the angel Gabriel to the prophet Muhammad, who transmitted it to the first Muslim without change or error (Hassan Riffaat 1991:30). It is the highest authority in Islam. Other sources such as Sunnah and Hadith, which are oral traditions attributed to the prophet Muhammad (Hassan Riffaat 1991:30) are the secondary sources. It is these sources, whether Koran, Sunnah or Hadith that instruct the Muslim in everything

including their behaviour in every day life. Victor (1992:107 cited in Irwin 1990:48) claims that "for Muslim there is no distinction between religion and lifestyle; religion is a lifestyle".

In Indonesia women's position in society is greatly influenced by Islam and in general there is still significant bias regarding the relationship between men and women (Hassan Riffaat 1991). The gender bias is reflected in that men's dominance places women as subordinate, secondary and inferior to men in almost every aspect of life. A husband is considered the leader in the family and is placed in a higher position. His word is law. Men are placed above women in general in Muslim society because the Muslim believes and assumes that it is stated in Koran and Hadith. However, Prof. Riffaat Hassan who is a feminist theologian specializing in Islam argues that there is no inherent gender bias in Koran and that the gender bias occurs in Hadith. This is supported by Krisnawaty (1993) and Wajidi (1993) who describe that there are many statements from Hadith that are discriminatory to women. For example, Hadith says that "most of the inhabitants of hell are women". Wajidi (1993:21) describes

that there are many mythologies about women in Islam and their relationship to hell and heaven regarding a husband. For example, if a wife refuses her husband sexual intercourse at night, she will be blamed by the angel from the moment of her refusal until the morning comes, and she is sinful from this. Another story tells that the best way for a woman to get to heaven is their obedience to their husband. In contrast, there is no similar mythology with similar consequences for husbands. In cases like this, Krisnawaty (1993:165) claims that the mythologies which describe women's positions and roles make women subordinate and are strengthened by religious interpretations, religious values, tradition and education, and must be eradicated.

Istiadah (1995) points out that until now Islam has regarded Indonesian women weaker than men. Women must be protected by people who are considered their superior such as their father, brother or husband. Further, Istiadah said that the verses of Koran and Hadith support the notion that women have to work in domestic environments, though if they want to work outside they could, as long as they obtained permission from their husband. Women

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were regarded as too weak to be involved in public matters.

The translation of the Koran that is widely used by Indonesian Muslims is the translation from Indonesian Religious Affairs Department. This translation contains conventional discourses concerning women. The verse Annisa '34 in Indonesian translation reads:

Kaum laki-laki itu adalah pemimpin bagi kaum wanita, oleh karena Allah telah melebihkan sebagian mereka(laki-laki) atas sebagian yang lain(wanita), dan karena mereka (laki-laki) telah menafkahkan sebagian dari harta mereka, sebab itu maka wanita yang saleh ialah yang taat pada Allah lagi memelihara diri ketika suaminya tidak ada oleh karena Allah telah memelihara(mereka). Wanita-wanita yang kamu khawatirkan nusuznya maka nasehatilah mereka dan pisahkanlah mereka di tempat tidur, dan pukullah mereka. Kemudian jika mereka menta'atimu, maka janganlah

kamu mencari-cari jalan untuk menyusahkannya. Sesungguhnya Allah Maha Tinggi lagi Maha Besar. (In Istiadah 1995: 7).

Translated literally:

“Men are the leaders of women, because God has given the one (men) more (advantages) than the other (women), and because (men) have supported them from their means. Therefore, the righteous women are devoutly obedient to God (and) protect themselves in the absence of the husbands as God has protected them. As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill conduct, admonish them and refuse to share their beds, and beat them. If they return to obedience, seek not against them. For God is the most High (and) Great” (Istiadah:1995:7).

This verse is a regulation of husband and wife relationships because of the words *ar rijal* (the men) and the word *annisa'* (the women). Istiadah claims that in the Indonesian version, these words are assumed to address husband

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and wife. This verse teaches three things regarding the relationship between husbands and wives. The first is that husbands are stronger than their wives both physically and psychologically, and should therefore rule their wives (Department Agama Republik Indonesia, 1989:55, in Istiadah 1995:7). The second teaching is that the righteous, or good wife is the wife who obeys her husband. This subservience includes, not leaving the house without permission, never refusing a request for sex and not fasting outside Ramadhan without consent. The third teaching is the gender-oriented division of labour. It assigns the men roles as breadwinners and the women domestic duties. In Indonesia, the marriage laws declare the man the head of the family and the woman is the homemaker. There are a many books that describe this gender-oriented division of labour as being the most appropriate for Muslims: Mustaghfiri, 1983; Thahar, 1984; Al Baqdadi 1998; Shaleh 1989; Dahri, 1991 (Department Agama Republik Indonesia, 1989: 55, in Istiadah 1995:7).

Berninghausen and Kerstan (1992:17) discuss the social status and power of Indonesian women. They claim that, "even when women possess an important economic position, their freedom of action in both the public and the

family areas are limited..and their social status is generally lower than that of men". They added that this exists in most cultures in Indonesia, even the Minangkabau culture, which is renown for its matrilineal system. However, even in matrilineal societies, it is the mother's brother who is the official decision maker. This fact, combined with the infiltration of Islamic norms, limits women's participation in public, with the practical result that men hold exclusive political power.

F. Interruption and How Interruption is Defined

There are varying opinions about what interruption means in conversation. Some linguists define it as simultaneous talk and some say it is a violation. It is generally assumed that interruption occurs when a person initiates talk while another person is talking. The basic function of the behavior is to prevent the first speaker finishing his utterance and to allow the second speaker to take over the floor (James and Clarke 1993:232). The word "interruption" generally has negative connotations, implying violation of another's right to speak. However, interruption has been shown to be indicative of a type of social relationship. It is not always disruptive, but can serve as a means of promoting group discussion (Ng, Brooke & Dunne, 1995), or a way of acknowledging another speaker's utterances

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(Alequire, 1978 in Pillon et al., 1992). Many other researchers have also confirmed the supportive or cooperative function of interruptions, as signaling and promoting solidarity between interactants (Beatties, 1982; Bennet, 1981; Kennedy & Camden, 1983; Eldesky, 1981; Tannen, 1990; Goldberg, 1990). Tannen (1990) used the words “Cooperative Overlapping” to describe interruption which did not have negative consequences. Hence interruption can have many and varying definitions.

Interruption has been defined in various ways, as a violation, cooperative, and “relationally neutral”, a term which was introduced by Goldberg in 1990. An interruption is traditionally defined as violating normal conversational rules in order to take control of the floor and the topic of conversation (West, 1983:55; James and Clarke, 1993: 232). However further research into interruption has revealed that not all interruptions are violations of conversational rules and not all interruptions are unwelcome or inappropriate. So clearer and more precise definitions for interruption had to be devised. James and Clarke stated there are simultaneous utterances that are not inappropriate and have therefore been excluded from the definition of interruption. These are called “Back Channel” utterances and are supportive rather than disruptive in nature. They are utterances such as “Yeah”, “right”, “I see”, “mhm”, “uh-huh” etc. which are used primarily as an

indication of interest or agreement in what the primary speaker is saying (James and Clarke, 1993: 238). Tannen (1990) has argued that other forms of simultaneous talk can also be viewed as appropriate and are not violations. She terms this kind of interruption cooperative and incorporates it into a description of a style of communication she calls “high-involvement”. This kind of interruption can serve as a means of communicating that one is enthusiastic about and involved in the discussion. This kind of interruption can be supportive, collaborative and rapport building rather than unwelcome or rude hence it is defined as cooperative rather than violating. The third definition of interruption, “relationally neutral”, was created to describe forms of interruption which were neither violating nor cooperative, but were nonetheless legitimate. For example, a person might interrupt a speaker if clarification was required to understand the speaker’s statement. Or, if in responding to a question, it is obvious that the speaker did not understand the question, it is legitimate to interrupt in order to rephrase the question in a clearer way (Goldberg 1990). There are also situations that require immediate speech and where interruptions are appropriate. For example, “Fire!” or “Don’t touch that, it’s hot!” (Tannen 1989: 269); Goldberg 1990: 886-888). Hence the third definition for interruption, “relationally neutral”.

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a. Types of Interruption

Though there are different definitions for interruption, the definitions are not specific enough for use in analysis and more specific descriptions are required. Ferguson (1977) introduced a model for types of interruption that has been used to model further studies on interruption. (For example, Beattie 1981 and 1982, Marche and Peterson 1993; Craig and Pitts 1990). Ferguson describes an interruption as any deviation from a smooth switch of speakers and has divided the interruptions into four types:

Simple Interruption - Involving both simultaneous speech and a break in continuity in the current speaker's utterance. The interrupter succeeds in taking the floor.

Overlap Interruption - Also involving simultaneous speech in which the initiator of simultaneous speech takes the floor, but there is no break in continuity in the first speaker's utterance.

Butting-in Interruption - In this type, simultaneous speech is present and there is a break in verbal continuity in the original speaker's utterance. But in contrast to the

other two types, the interrupter does not succeed in gaining the floor.

Silent Interruption - No simultaneous talk is involved. The first speaker's utterance is incomplete and the interrupter takes the floor.

There are also other types of interruption which are in common use by researchers (from James and Clarke 1993: 241):

Disruptive Interruption – The interrupter succeeds in taking over the floor and prevents the speaker finishing their utterance.

Non-disruptive Interruption – Any interruption which is not a disruptive interruption.

Successful Interruption – The interrupter succeeds in taking over the floor, it is irrelevant how the interrupter got the floor.

Unsuccessful Interruption – The interrupter does not succeed in taking over the floor, it is irrelevant whether or not the interrupter wanted to take over the floor.

Back Channel or Cooperative Overlap - Interjections such as “uhu”, “yes”, “I see”, and

interruptions of the type where the interrupter interjects with a sentence or opinion, and is interrupted in turn by the interruptee. Neither of the parties consider this behaviour rude or intrusive.

It is evident that the above general types can be divided into further subtypes. It is obviously important to precisely describe the type of interruptions used in each analysis of interruption. James and Clarke (1993) also noted that conversation is jointly produced, and whether an interruption is successful or unsuccessful will depend on the relationship between the interrupter and the speaker. It is therefore evident that studies of interruption should encompass the context of the interruption as well as concentrating on the type of interruption.

b. Interruptions and Dominance

Based on the various definitions and types of interruption which indicate its roles and function in conversation, it can be understood that interruption can indicate power dominance in conversation, where taking the floor is seen as dominance. That dominance is indicated only when the floor is taken is important, as there is no correlation between unsuccessful interruptions and dominance

(Roger and Nesshoever 1987). Looking for the dominant party in a conversation via analysing interruption has pitfalls in that the context in which the interruptions are used must be taken into account (James and Clarke 1993). For example, “Don’t touch that, it’s hot!” may be judged a successful interruption but is not necessarily indicative of the overall dominance of the interrupter.

c. Interruptions and Gender

There are many studies that report significant differences between same-sex and cross-sex conversations where interruptions were measured. These studies reported that men more frequently interrupt women than vice versa. In one of the first reports of such observations, Zimmerman and West (1975) found that men dominated and controlled conversations between men and women using recordings of conversations held in public places. There were ten same sex pairs of each gender and eleven cross sex pairs. The type of conversations varied broadly from couples confessing intimacies to each other to greetings between acquaintances. Analysis of their data showed that men interrupted women more often than women interrupted men. Despite this criticism, Zimmerman and West have many supporters. Pillon (1982 in Pillon

et al., 1992) reports that males tend to interrupt their partner more often than females who also show more unsuccessful attempts to interrupt. Rosenblum (1986:160) cited in James and Clarke (1993) states that "men are more likely to interrupt and overlap women's speech than the reverse". Similar results have also been found by researchers; West (1975), Esposito (1979), West & Zimmerman (1983), Petterson (1986). De Franciscio (1998), in his study of men and women's conversational behaviour in marital relations, found that men display a high proportion of violation of no-response and also of interruptions.

However there are also many studies against saying that there are no significant differences of number and type of interruption in same-sex and cross-sex interruption studies. James and Clark (1993) pointed out, evidence indicating that the finding that men interrupt women more than women interrupt men is not true because the majority of studies "dealing with gender and the use of interruptions reveal that this is not the case". Beattie (1982:859) argued against Zimmerman and West's findings by saying that their samples are small and unrepresentative, and hence represent a weakness of the data. Also their interpretation is too narrow. Beattie (1981) in his study of

university tutorials found that there are no sex differences in the frequency or type of interruption used. Roger and Neshsoever (1987), examining mixed-sex dyadic interaction in an experimental setting, also pointed out that there was no evidence for gender differences in interruption behaviour. Similarly, Dindia (1987), in research on the effects of sex of subject and sex of partner on interruption reported that men did not show more interruption than women and also women did not interrupt more than men. A similar finding by Marche and Petterson (1993) showed that males did not interrupt any more than females, and females were interrupted just as often by females as males.

Kennedy and Carmen (1983), Murray and Covely (1988) and Nohara (1992) reported the contrasting result that women interrupt more frequently than men. Bierbach (1997), making an analysis of a 50-minute group discussion from a routine AV program and also some observations in real life, claimed that Spanish women interrupt more than men. She explained further that "men made twice as many attempts to interrupt their partners than women but succeeded only a few times (3/27), while women tried far less and succeeded most of the time (10/13)." Nohara (1992)

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demonstrated the problems inherent in the study of interruption and gender by conducting experiments in two different settings using the same methods. In one setting the females interrupted more, and in the other the males interrupted more.

The results of the studies depend on the social situation and the type of analysis used to interpret the results. For example, many studies differ in the way interruption is defined. Because the definitions of interruption vary widely and they are used differently in the various studies above, there will be different results. This leads to two questions: What is the most accurate definition and type of interruption for use in analysing power dominance in cross-sex communication? How does interruption create dominance and power imbalance within the interaction?

G. Problems Analysing Interruptions in The Context of Gender and Dominance

Before one can decide whether a frequency of a certain type of interruption indicates dominance, one has to decide exactly what the dominance is, what type of dominance one is looking for. The effect of the dominance on the other speakers (are we looking for positive dominance, such as the one found in a

parent child relationship, or negative dominance, such as the type found in abusive marriages?) The culture must also be looked at closely. Conversational dominance in one culture may be accepted in another. There are difficulties with the subjectivity of the researchers, e.g. what is perceived as negative dominance by them may not actually be negative dominance in terms of the culture. There may also be different criteria for a legitimate interruption in different cultures. (It may be rude, for example, in a culture to interrupt for clarification of a point).

West & Zimmerman (1983:103) claimed that "male interruption behaviour in interaction with females is a way of asserting the right to control the topic of conversation. It is not only as a result of one's lesser status, but might also be a means of establishing and maintaining that status difference." This implies that men engage in conversation with the intent of controlling it. However, Tannen (1990) in her book "You just don't understand" explained this behaviour in terms of the male world-view. As men see the world in terms of a hierarchical structure, they are constantly unconsciously attempting to define, maintain or elevate themselves in that structure. This implies that evidence stating that men dominate women in conversation does not mean that men intend to dominate the conversation. It should be noted however, that whether or not men

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intend to dominate conversation, the domination is still present. And this domination can affect the power that women have in conversations, relationships and decisions involving their own lives and the lives of their families.

Here, it can be said that since the male has more power and status than the female, it is not surprising that many studies found that men interrupt women more than women interrupt men. Of course, it still depends on various factors such as personality, the situations where the conversation occur, the relationship between the people, and also their cultural backgrounds (Tannen 1994).

H. Resolutions

The interruption studies above involve defining interruption and dividing interruption into categories of type. There are conflicting findings in interruption studies, some studies find that men interrupt women more than women interrupt men however, some studies find that the reverse is true. While others state that there is no significant sex difference in interruption. The various findings above studied interruption in different ways and consequently they got different results. For example, they defined interruption differently and used dramatically different participants in their studies (from family settings to tutorial groups). It is impossible at first glance to come to a conclusion about sex differences in interruption based on the above contrary findings.

I have noticed that the studies do not take into account things such as cultural background, personality of participants, etc. Ideally, the types of interruption should be constant for each study (e.g. successful and unsuccessful, etc.), but the analysis of the data should take place with context and cultural values in mind. This is because successful interruption can mean dominance in one culture and not in another. Therefore when analysing interruption between Indonesian couples for dominance, their culture must be taken into account. Great care has been taken with the methodology to ensure that this is the case.

CHAPTER 3

THE TYPE AND AMOUNT OF INTERRUPTION IN THE CONVERSATION OF INDONESIAN HUSBANDS AND WIVES

Overall, Muslim males preferred Simple and Silent types of interruption. For Muslim females the main modes of interruption were Back Channel or Cooperative Overlap and Butting-in. For the non-Muslim groups, males preferred Silent Interruption and Smooth Speaker Switch while the non-Muslim females tended to prefer a Back Channel or Cooperative Overlapping and Smooth Speaker Switch combination. Given that there have been no studies of interruption in the Indonesian context, a classification that is based on the cultural norms observed by community members. In order to verify these norms, explicitly in the description of interruptions in the following section.

A. Simple Interruption

Simple Interruption involves both simultaneous speech and a break in continuity in the current speaker's utterance. The interrupter succeeds in taking the floor.

In an Indonesian context, this type of interruption is usually seen as an indication of power rather than as a common occurrence in the conversation. This is because it is categorised as rude and impolite to break the continuity and hold the floor while someone is speaking. However, it is not rude if you are the more powerful person in the conversation, such as the employer, parent, eldest sibling, or husband. Simple Interruption is therefore defined as dominant, and as the interrupter takes the floor, successful.

The males used more Simple Interruption overall, with 24% for Muslim males which is around twice as often as the non-Muslim males who used Simple Interruption 13% of the time. The females from both religious groups hardly used Simple Interruption at all, both Muslim and non-Muslim females used it for only 2% of their total interruptions.

For example, in Muslim couple 1's conversation, the husband performed a Simple Interruption as illustrated below. (I = wife and S = husband):

(I) Sekolah pengantarnya bahasa Inggris, no problem, mereka bisa menyesuaikan...

(S) |Ya, tapi tetap masih berat bagi mereka, pertama kalinya tetap suatu hal yang berat bagi mereka, stress, dan macam-macam hal lainnya yang memberatkan.

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English translation:

(W) English as a media at the school, no problem, they can adjust...

(H) |Yes, but it is still hard for them as it is their first time, it can be stressful and there will be other things that will be difficult for them.

This shows that the husband breaks the continuity while his wife is talking. Consequently she stops talking and allows her husband to gain the floor and continue his utterance.

The fact that males were more fond of this type of interruption than females, indicates that it is probably more acceptable for the husband to perform this type of interruption, as he is seen as the authority figure. However, for Indonesian wives it is more difficult to use this interruption, particularly with their husband who is considered the person to whom they must give respect, and honour as the head of the family. In this case a power difference between husband wife has emerged as the difference in amount of Dominant Interruptions used by them, that is, the husband uses significantly more dominant (Simple) interruptions than his wife.

B. Overlap Interruption

Overlap Interruption also involves simultaneous speech in which the initiator of simultaneous speech

takes the floor, however, there is no break in continuity in the first speaker's utterance.

In an Indonesian conversation, it may be considered rude if a person with less power or authority interrupts in this way. They are expected to let the person with more power finish their utterance completely before beginning their own. However, it may also be possible that this type of interruption could be interpreted as Cooperative Interruption, especially when affirming the message of the first speaker. This could be seen as a way of demonstrating respect for the power or status of the authority figure.

Due to the difficulties with defining this type of interruption as dominant (outlined in the methodology) this type of interruption is only defined as successful, as the interrupter takes the floor.

In this book, Muslim males tended to use more Overlapping Interruption (8%) while this type of interruption was minimal in Muslim females (1%). The reverse trend was found with non-Muslim couples, where the females used Overlapping Interruption more (13%), over twice as often as their male counterparts which just 4%.

Two examples will be drawn in order to explore the two possible types of Overlap:

Example: I comes from the conversation of Muslim couple 2 where the husband is the interrupter.

(I) Ya kalau saya tetap mendukung Amin Rais gitu karena dia berani yang seperti saya bilang tadi itu mengungkapkan mana yang benar dan mana yang salah.

(S) |Tapi Amin Rais walaupun bagus ya...tapi partainya hanya mendapatkan sedikit suara jika dibandingkan dengan partainya Megawati dan Golkar, nanti kalau dia menang wah nanti orang bilang apa, kok Megawati aja nggak menang malah dia.

English translation:

(W) Yes I still support Amin Rais because I think that he is brave enough to say what is right and what is not.

(H) |But although Amin Rais is good, his party won less than Megawati's party and the Golkar party. How will people react if he becomes president? They will say, "How could it happen?", if even Megawati cannot win why should he?

The context of the interruption shows that the interrupter does not agree with the first speaker's opinion. He presented the disagreement by saying

the word 'but' and performed an Overlap Interruption. However, the wife as the interruptee still can finish her utterance while her husband interrupts.

The following example is from non-Muslim couple III where the wife is the interrupter:

(S)...sebelumnya @@@ siapa yang menang, itu khan biasa. @@@

(I) | Ooh @@@ Iya benar itu.

English Translation would be:

(H)...before @@@ (laugh) it is usual who will be the winner @@@ (laugh).

(W) | Ooh @@@ (laugh). That's right.

The context shows that the interruption by the wife is an agreement with her husband, this is a more Cooperative Interruption, and can indicate respect for her husband. Similar modes were found in the conversation of couples from both religions, where if the husband overlaps, it is more a showing of disagreement with his wife's opinion rather than as indication of agreement. Non-Muslim wives used this interruption more than their husbands did (13% and 4% respectively). There are two possible explanations for this result. One is that non-Muslim husbands are more tolerant of their wives interrupting in this manner, and second, the non-

Muslim wives may have been using this type of interruption in a complimentary sense.

If Overlap Interruption is only considered rude when the person with less power uses it, and it is true that Muslim males have more power in the husband/wife relationship, it follows that Muslim males could use this form of interruption, while it would be unacceptable for a Muslim female to do so. This conclusion is reflected in the data, which shows that Muslim females use this form of interruption very rarely, only one Overlap Interruption from a Muslim wife occurred at all, compared to 14 Overlap Interruptions from the Muslim males. When the Overlap Interruption by the Muslim female was examined, it was revealed that she used Overlap in a complimentary sense. The same regularity was not found in the Muslim males' use of Overlap Interruption. Since Overlap can be interpreted as demonstrating respect for the power status of an authority figure, the more frequent use of Overlap by non-Muslim females may also be an indication of respect for their husbands.

Despite the fact that it is difficult to ascertain whether Overlap is dominant or non-dominant, it is possible to classify it as successful or unsuccessful, and it is in this classification that Overlap Interruption makes a difference to the result. If Overlap Interruptions are seen as successful

interruptions, then it is clear that Muslim males have more successful interruptions than their wives and non-Muslim females have more successful interruptions than their husbands. If successful interruptions are regarded as dominant then the hypothesis is supported in the Muslim case but not in the non-Muslim case.

C. Butting Interruption

In this type of interruption, simultaneous speech is present and there is a break in verbal continuity in the original speaker's utterance. But in contrast to the previous two types, the interrupter does not succeed in gaining the floor. It is possible to predict that the first speaker in the conversation has more power than the interrupter given that, if the interrupter was more dominant, the interruption would have been successful, in this sense, the Butting-in Interruption may be defined as an unsuccessful Simple Interruption. The Butting-in Interruption has not been defined as dominant and has been defined as unsuccessful.

In Indonesia, the Butting-in Interruption may indicate that the first speaker has more power than the interrupter, as the interrupter does not succeed in gaining the floor and the first speaker finishes his/her utterances.

The results show that Muslim females tended to use the Butting-in Interruption more often than Muslim males, the interruptions occurring at 20% and 14% respectively. The non-Muslim couples used this type of interruption less, but the females still used it more at 10% of their interruptions compared to the males' 6%. The fact that the females used this interruption more than their husbands could be another indication that Indonesian females have less power than their husbands, as with a Butting-In Interruption, it is the interruptee who is dominant.

This example is taken from the interaction of Muslim couple 3 where the wife is fond of using the Butting-in Interruption.

(S)...begitu. Jadi mereka itu datang ke satu tempat, katakanlah di Indonesia, cari daerah panas, buka baju berjemur sampai hitam begitu.

(I) |Loh ini tergantung orang...tergantung orangnya, masalahnya begini...

(S) Nah kita nggak tahu siapa orangnya!

(I) |Iya justru itu, jangan langsung di bilang...misalnya Bali, itu khan tergantung orang misalnya begini, eeh berkunjung ke suatu daerah itu misalnya mungkin kalau ke Bali pingin cari panasnya, tapi mungkin juga dia ingin misalnya ya kayak ritual-ritual penguburan entah ada peringatan apa...

(S) |Itu beda! Kalau umpamanya berkunjung....

English translation:

(H)...that's it. So they come to a place, for example in Indonesia they look for a hot area, take off their clothing and stay in the sun until their skin is burnt, right? @@@ (laugh)

(W) |It depends on the person, the problem is...

(H) |That's why, we don't know who the person is!

This shows the wife trying to put forth her arguments but she can not be successful because the husband does not allow this by interrupting dominantly with a Silent Interruption. The Butting-in Interruption was attempted twice by the wife in this part of the conversation.

The Butting-in Interruption was not classed as dominant because it is clear that that dominant person in this case is the interruptee, who continues to speak while the interrupter's sentence remains unfinished. So it is acceptable to conclude from the result that the hypothesis is supported and in this case the husbands are dominant, as the wives perform significantly more Butting-in interruptions than their husbands.

D. Silent Interruption

In Silent Interruption, no simultaneous talk is involved. The first speaker's utterance is incomplete and the interrupter takes the floor.

In Indonesia, this type of interruption would most likely occur when the interrupter was a dominant person, even though there is a pause before the second speaker's utterance. This is because it is considered rude to interrupt in this way, especially if the interrupter changes the topic of conversation. People who have more power and authority, however, are allowed to interrupt in this way.

This book shows that males tended to use Silent Interruption more frequently than females overall, but it occurred more in the interaction of Muslim couples. Muslim males used it for 40% of their interruptions compared to their wives 4%. The same comparison occurred with the non-Muslim couples where the husbands used this interruption for 28% of all interruptions while their wives only used it for 8%.

This illustration comes from the conversation of non-Muslim couple I where the husband is prone to use this kind of interruption:

(I)... begitu dong orang yang jadi presiden..supaya tidak terjadi kekacauan seperti sekarang yang terjadi di Indonesia, kerusuhan di mana-mana, pemerin...

(S) |Semestinya harus begitu, tapi waktu Suharto masih berkuasa, apa yang dia mau lakukan itu dapat ia lakukan, makanya lawan-lawan politiknya tersingkirkan semua.. Tapi ya mungkin juga sudah

kehendak Tuhan..bahwa Suharto itu harus turun dan ia dipaksa turun, dan syukurlah ternyata itu sudah terlaksana. Dan....

English translation would be:

(W).... a president should be like that so there is no trouble, such as the trouble that occurred in Indonesia, troubles every where, govern...

(H) [It must be like that. But when Suharto was president, he did whatever he could to kick out all his politician enemies. Yes maybe, it is God's will that he has to step down. Lucky. And....

This interaction shows that the wife cannot even finish her utterance because her husband does not let her to do this when he dominantly interrupts. In Indonesia this type of interruption is only acceptable if performed by a person with more authority. Hence this type of interruption has been classified dominant, and successful.

The significance of this result is that the males in the study used this Dominant Interruption type far more than their wives. It can be safely assumed that this result supports the hypothesis that there is a power distance present between husbands and wives.

It is interesting to note that in order for the husband to perform a silent Interruption, he requires cooperation from his wife, who must stop speaking

before she finishes her utterance. Unfortunately, exploring the significance of this observation is beyond the scope of this book.

E. Smooth Speaker Switch

This type of interruption means that a successful interruption has taken place without simultaneous speech and with the first speaker's utterance complete. This interruption is obviously not dominant, but it is successful, and has been included in the successful category.

In Indonesia this not an indication of power because this is just a normal conversation. The first speaker finished their utterance and there is a pause before the following speaker starts their utterance.

Muslim females used this type of interruption far more than their husbands, 12% compared to 6%. The non-Muslim couples used this type of interruption in equal amounts at 36%. If the amount of interruptions that occur in conversations of Muslim and non-Muslim couples are compared, non-Muslim couples used more Smooth Speaker Switches than Muslim couples overall.

This example is taken from non-Muslim couple 4. The wife in this couple is prone to do more of this kind of interruption.

(S) Ya mungkin dia belum tahu banyak tempat-tempat wisata yang di Indonesia.

(I) |Suruh saja ke Flores, di sana khan pemandangannya bagus, kalau di Bali khan pasti di lewati, tapi kalau ke Flores khan perlu perencanaan ke sana.

English translation:

(H) Yes maybe he does not know many tourism areas in Indonesia.

(W) Ask him to go to Flores, it has beautiful sightseeing, he can go through Bali, but he certainly has to make a plan to go to Flores.

The Smooth Speaker Switch is considered a successful interruption, and in this case it was the interruption type that was the most successful for the females in the study.

Non-Muslim females use smooth-speaker-switches for 36% of their total interruptions, three times more than Muslim females to their partners. This could be an indication that the non-Muslim males, consciously or unconsciously, grant their wives permission to speak in this case.

It is interesting to note that non-Muslim couples used this type of interruption far more than the Muslim couples, and in equal amounts for husbands and wives (36%). It is possible to conclude that

non-Muslim couples have less of a need to interrupt than Muslim couples, or that their conversation is more cooperative. It is hard to say whether the results for Smooth Speaker Switches are supportive of the hypothesis or not. One thing is clear, that the Muslim wives have more success interrupting if they wait until their husbands stop speaking. This could be indicative of a power difference between the Muslim husbands and wives and would therefore support the hypothesis.

F. Back Channeling or Cooperative Overlap

Back Channeling occurs when the listener interjects with utterances such as, “uhu”, “yes” and “I see” which are not intended as interruptions, but merely indicative of the listeners understanding of the speaker. Cooperative Overlap is a term coined by Tannen (1990) in which the interrupter interjects with an opinion and is interrupted in turn by the interruptee. The term Cooperative Overlap can be confusing as there is no simultaneous speech in this type of interruption. Back Channel or Cooperative Overlap have been defined together as Cooperative Interruption. They are defined as unsuccessful by default as the interrupter does not take the floor.

In an Indonesia context, this kind of interruption is seen as a common interaction between speakers in conversation. Although it is possible that it could be considered an impolite response, it will be allowed

as long as the interrupter does not break the continuity of the first speaker. Sometimes it will be interpreted as showing respect for the speaker, as it indicates that the interrupter is listening.

Back Channel or Cooperative-Overlap interruptions can be observed to be the main type of interruption used by Muslim females, comprising 61% of their total interruptions. In contrast, the Muslim males used it a mere 8% of the times they interrupted. Non-Muslim females used Back Channel or Cooperative Overlap 31% of the time, around twice as often as their partners who used them about 13% of the times they interrupted. However, the discrepancy between the non-Muslim husbands and wives is not as large as in the case of Muslim couples.

This example is taken from the third Muslim couple's conversation, it illustrates Back Channeling from the wife to her husband.

(S)Indonesia itu nggak mandiri, orang Indonesia itu terlalu banyak memerintah, terlalu cepat bilang susah, terlalu cepat bilang eh berat. Nah tetapi kalau ada orang ya

(I) |Uhm. |Uhm.

(S)Umpamanya kepengen dia ke luar negeri karena ingin dia itu merasakan itu semua, nah itu akan lain

ceritanya. Nah kebetulan saya juga punya teman itu Mbak Gina tuh

(I) |Uhm.

English translation:

(H) Indonesian people are not independent people because we usually say something is difficult or we are quick to say something is hard. That's why if someone, says for

(W) |Uhm. |Uhm.

(H) example that they want to go overseas, that is because they want to learn to become independent, that will be different. For example I have a friend also from Indonesia...

(W) |Uhm....

In this situation, there are a few possible explanations for the wife's use of Back-Channeling. She wants to show that she is aware of her husband's utterances and displays it by Back-Channelling. She may also want to emphasise that she understands her husband and shows her agreement in a cooperative way, this is supportive and complimentary to the speaker.

Here is an example of Cooperative Overlap where there is no simultaneous speech and the interrupter fails to take the floor.

This example is taken from Muslim couple 4's interaction where wife is doing this kind of interruption:

(S)khan tergantung dari waktu masing-masing. Jadi saya rasa PPIA itu bagus.

(I) |Tapi apa manfaatnya ketika pertama kali bapak datang ke Australia? Saya pikir nggak ad...

(S) |Oh... ada eh sedikitnya kita jadi saling kenal dan selain saling kenal kita juga mendapat informasi begitu, iya khan?

English translation:

(H) It depends on the amount of free time each person has, I think PPIA is good.

(W) |But what was the PPIA's contribution when you first came to Australia? I think no...

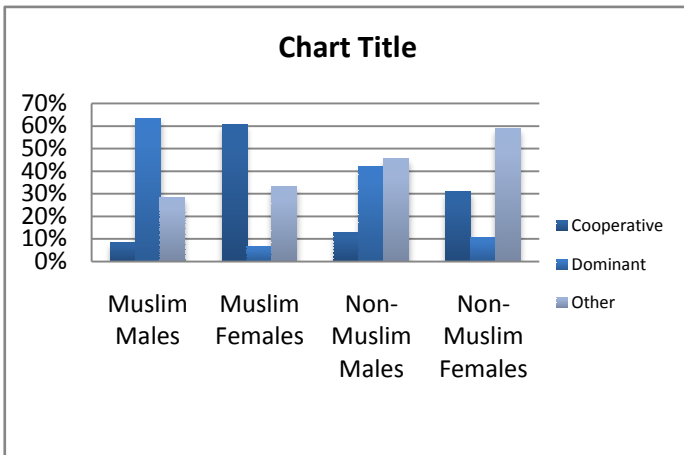
(H) |Oh there is, at least we can know each other and we can also get information, can't we?

It is the first interruption in this example that is classified as Cooperative Overlap. This interruption, at first glance, looks like a Smooth-Speaker-Switch, however a Smooth-Speaker-Switch is a successful interruption and this interruption is not successful as the wife is interrupted in turn by the husband with a Silent Interruption. This is the kind of interruption that the new category, Cooperative Overlap was introduced to accommodate. It is classified as cooperative, as the wife waits for her husband to finish before beginning her utterance.

It is interesting that this supportive mode of interruption is the one used most often by the Muslim wives and is used hardly at all by their husbands. This alone indicates that the results support the hypothesis, at least as far as Muslim couples are concerned. The difference in usage for non-Muslim couples was not as large, but females still used this supportive mode of interruption more than the males. The results from this interruption type support the hypothesis that a power difference exists between husbands and wives in Indonesia.

CHAPTER 4

DOMINANT AND COOPERATIVE INTERRUPTION



Graph 2 – Dominant and Cooperative Interruption categories.

The Simple and Silent interruptions was classified as Dominant Interruptions because both Simple and Silent Interruption are successful interruptions and could be an indication of dominance in an Indonesian context. In practice, these interruptions are usually from people who are authority figures in Indonesian communities. For example in this book, husbands, who are popular as authority figures in the

community showed that they tended to prefer these types of interruption in conversation with their wives while Dominant Interruption is not commonly used by wives. In this example, the wife attempts a Butting-in Interruption (this is an unsuccessful Simple Interruption, which is classified as dominant) and a Cooperative Overlap Interruption (which is an unsuccessful Smooth Speaker Switch), you can see that the husband becomes easily annoyed by his wife's attempts to express her opinion. The example comes from the conversation of the first Muslim couple, the husband from this couple showed a strong preference for Silent Interruption:

(S)itu harus jelas di pergunakan untuk kepentingan apa dan

(I) |Oh ya, tentu dong, PPIA tahu itu...

(S) |Ya setiap organisasi begitu...

(I) |Jadi maksud...Dengar, tunggu dulu jika orang lagi menjelaskan dengar dulu.

(I) |Ya, tapi saya pikir PPIA punya prosedur seperti itu ...setiap pengeluaran keuangan khan dilaporkan, lagipula apa yang sudah kita-kita sumbangkan? Saya...

(S) |Ya saya tahu tapi maksudnya uang yang ada jangan hanya kumpul-kumpul dan makan tapi yang lain yang lebih positif.

An English translation would be:

(H) It must be made clear what it is used for and...

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(W) | Oh yes. PPIA knew that...

(H) | Yes, every organisation is like that.

(W) | So I mean...

(H) | Listen, if someone is still explaining you have to listen first.

(W) | Yes, I think that PPIA has a procedure like that... every time they spend money they report it, and what have we already given them? I...

(H) | I know, but I mean the money shouldn't be used just for informal meetings and parties, but for positive activities.

In this case, the wife interacts by interrupting her husband, showing her disagreement with opinions she does not think are acceptable. However, the husband finally feels uncomfortable and performs a Silent Interruption when he says: “[Listen, if someone is still explaining, you have to listen first.” The wife still tries to confirm her opinion by Cooperative Overlapping saying that: “[Yes, but I think PPIA has a procedure like that...” However, she can not continue her opinion because the husband silently interrupts again when he says: “[I know, but...”

CHAPTER 5

DOMINANT AND COOPERATIVE INTERRUPTION, MALE AND FEMALE COMPARISON

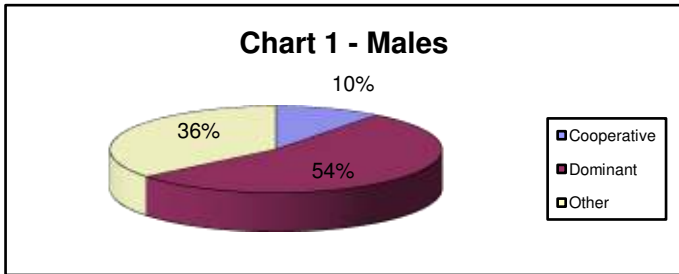


Chart 1 – Distribution of Dominant and Cooperative Interruption among male participants

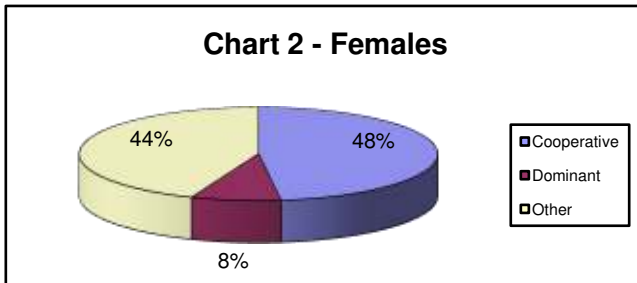


Chart 2 - Distribution of Dominant and Cooperative Interruption among female participants

There is a significant correlation between amount and types of interruption, and the sex of the participants. Simple and Silent interruptions were the types preferred by the male participants of the study and Back Channeling or Cooperative Overlapping were the forms preferred by the females. As Simple and Silent interruptions were classed as Dominant Interruptions we can conclude that the males were the dominant members of the conversations in the interactions of both Muslim and non-Muslim couples. Overall males used Dominant Interruptions for 54% of their interruptions while females used Dominant Interruptions only 8% of the time. Muslim males especially, favoured dominant types of interruption using it for 63% of their interruptions compared to their female counterparts who used this dominant way of interruption for just 6% of their total interruptions. Non-Muslim males used the Dominant Interruption for 42% of their interruptions compared to their wives who use them just 10% of the time.

However, for Cooperative Interruption, females are represented more than males overall with 48% of interruptions by females being cooperative compared to 10% of male interruptions being cooperative.

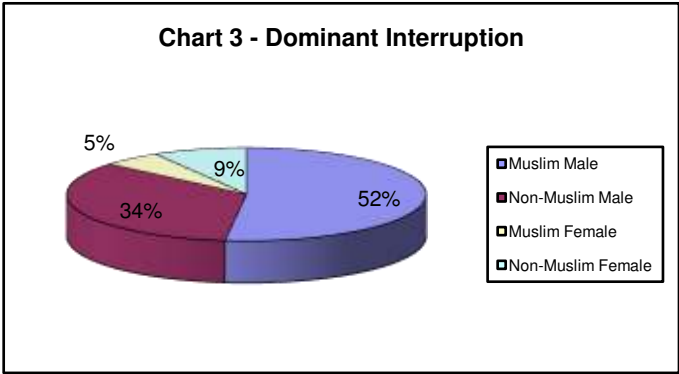


Chart 3 – Distribution of Dominant Interruption

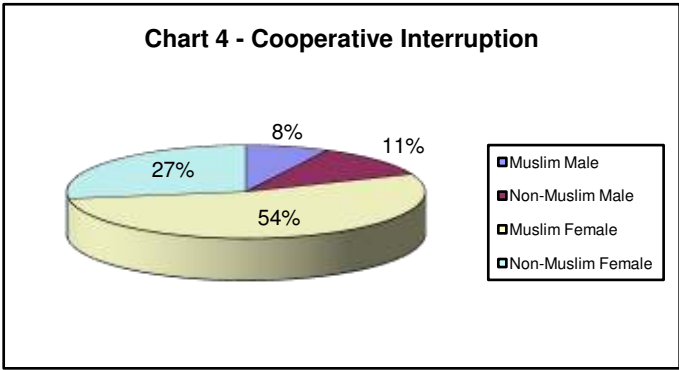


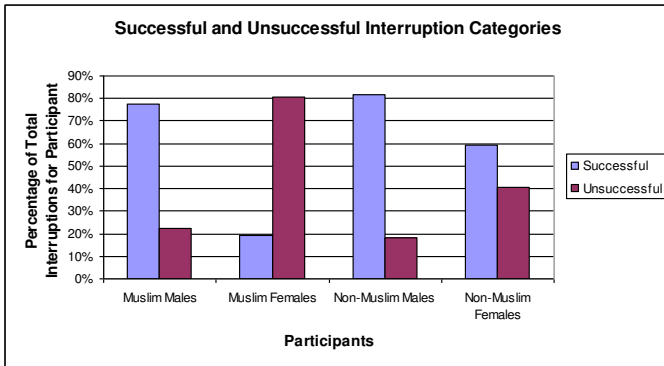
Chart 4 – Distribution of Cooperative Interruption

There is a difference in the amount of Cooperative Interruption when the participants are separated into their religious groups. Muslim wives predominantly used Cooperative Interruption (61%) while their husbands only used it 8% of the time. For non-Muslim couples the wives used 31% compared to their husbands who only used the cooperative forms of interruption about 13%.

This data significantly supports the hypothesis, demonstrating a power imbalance in the husband/wife interaction. The data also shows that the power imbalance is greater in Muslim marriages. It has already been demonstrated that Indonesian males use more dominant forms of interruption than Indonesian females. This is true in both Muslim and non-Muslim groups, however, it is Muslim males who use it most often, 63% of all interruptions they use are dominant. This can demonstrate that though a gender power imbalance may be a big part of the cultural values of Indonesia, it is supported and exaggerated by Islam. Females were notable for their use of cooperative forms of interruption. However, Muslim females use this form of interruption a great deal more than non-Muslim females. Which could be another consequence of the exaggerated power difference in Muslim marriages.

CHAPTER 6

SUCCESSFUL AND UNSUCCESSFUL INTERRUPTION



Graph 3 – Successful and Unsuccessful Interruption categories.

It is also interesting to compare the number of successful interruptions versus the number of unsuccessful interruptions in an interaction. The criteria for a successful interruption was that a speaker switch occurred, whether or not the interruption could be classed as dominant and regardless of the context or intention of the interrupter. An unsuccessful interruption, of course, indicated that a speaker switch did not occur,

regardless of the context or intention of the interrupter and interruptee.

Males achieved successful interruption more than females overall at about 79%, while females were successful 36% of the time. In Muslim interactions in particular, males interruptions were successful 77% of the time while their wives were successful for only 19% of their attempted interruptions. However for non-Muslim couples the difference is not so large just 82% successful interruptions for males and 60% for females.

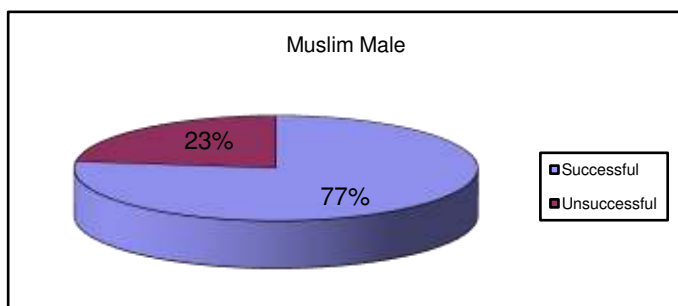


Chart 5 – Distribution of Successful and Unsuccessful interruptions for Muslim males

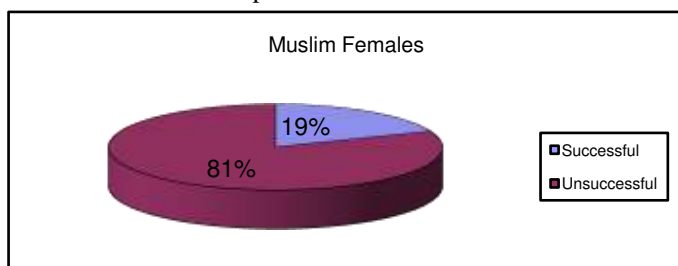


Chart 6 – Distribution of Successful and Unsuccessful interruptions for Muslim females

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The type and amount of interruption in the conversation of Indonesian husbands and wives

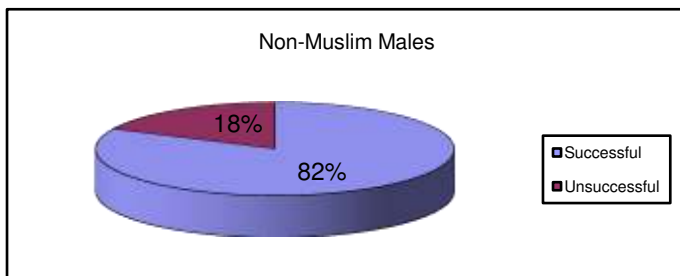


Chart 7 - Distribution of Successful and Unsuccessful interruptions for non -Muslim males

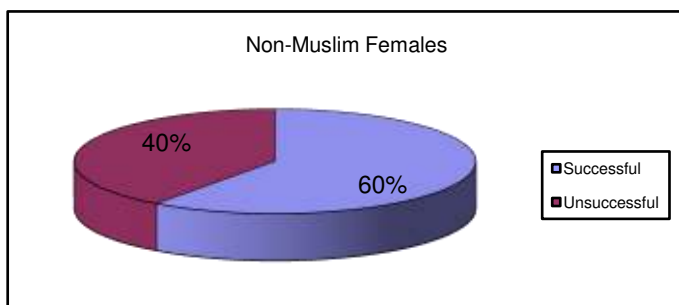


Chart 8- Distribution of Successful and Unsuccessful interruptions for non-Muslim females

Non-Muslim males successfully interrupted their wives much more often than their wives successfully interrupted them. Non-Muslim females, however, enjoyed a much higher success rate at 60%. It is interesting to note, that both Muslim and non-Muslim males are successful most of the times they attempt to interrupt, with 77% of interruptions being successful for Muslim males and 82% of attempted interruptions being successful for non-Muslim

males. The female success rate, however, does not follow the pattern one would expect from the examination of the data so far. As one would expect, 81% of interruptions attempted by Muslim females are unsuccessful. However, non-Muslim females enjoy a much higher success rate than their Muslim female counterparts as they are successful a huge 60% of the times they interrupt. It seems that only Muslim females are mostly unsuccessful in their interruptions.

The data revealed that males overall were more successful at gaining the floor when they interrupted than were females. Muslim females used far more Butting-in interruptions (unsuccessful Simple interruptions) than the non-Muslim females. This is possibly the most significant data gained in the study, as the more dominant person is far more likely to repeatedly gain the floor some one who is non-dominant. If one is to assume that the person who has more successful interruptions is the dominant person in an interaction, then the data shows that not only are men dominant in Indonesian marriages, but Muslim men are more dominant. This data supports the hypothesis that there is a power imbalance between Indonesian men and women that can be detected in the conversation in marital relationships.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This book revealed a power imbalance between Indonesian men and their wives measured by a significant difference in amount and type of interruptions. The men were found to use more dominant forms of interruption in conversation with their wives, and the men were more likely to be successful when they interrupted, while the wives tended to use more cooperative forms of interruption and were not as successful.

This book is concordant with the view that men are generally dominant in Indonesia and their dominion includes the family realm. Though some Indonesians will argue that Indonesian views on gender are changing, government policy and marital laws still emphasise a society run by and for men. Change in strong cultural beliefs is never immediate, and this book shows that power balances still exist within at least some Indonesian marital relationships.

Not surprisingly, there was a significant difference between Muslim and non-Muslim couples showing that Muslim males are more dominant in the marriage than non-Muslim males, confirming the influence of Islam on Indonesian marital relationships. Muslim males had a very strong preference for Dominant Interruption types (comprising 63% of all their interruptions), and were successful 77% of times they interrupted, while their wives used Dominant Interruption 6% of the time and were only successful 19% of the times they tried to interrupt. Non-Muslim males had more successful interruptions at 82% and only 42% of their interruptions were dominant. What is remarkable is that their wives were more than three times more successful than the Muslim wives succeeding to interrupt 60% of the time, but only 10% of their interruptions were dominant. This indicates a willingness by the non-Muslim males to let their wives hold the floor should they want to. While the Muslim males seemed far less interested in their wives utterances.

While recent western studies have shown that there is no difference between men and women and the way they converse, this book confirms the earlier studies that found men were dominant in conversations with women.

The mainly patriarchal culture of Indonesia could explain the correlation with earlier western studies. It might also be true that recent western studies have not been able to duplicate these earlier findings because recent awareness of gender issues has changed the way western males and females communicate in certain situations.

In Indonesian society men are considered to be authority figures and superior to females. Particularly, in the relationship between husband and wife, husbands are the dominant figures. There is a great deal of evidence supporting this (see the literature review) despite the fact that some people will say that Indonesia is different now and males and females are regarded as equal in the law and in society. However, when one observes the lives and relationships of people in Indonesia, the power imbalance is still evident (Murniati, 1993). This book, though small, has supported the theory that a power balance still exists by establishing that Indonesian males use more Dominant Interruptions, and have more successful interruptions than their wives, whether Muslim or non-Muslim. It is interesting to note though, that the power imbalance is more emphasised in Muslim marriages.

This difference between the Muslim and non-Muslim cultures was manifest most strongly in the distribution of successful interruptions in the

marriage. Though in non-Muslim marriages, the distribution still favoured the husband, the difference was not nearly as pronounced as the gap between the Muslim husband and wife.

The discrepancies observed above can be strongly linked to the difference between Muslim and non-Muslim cultural norms, and manifest themselves in the type and amount of interruption occurring in the conversation between married couples within the two cultures. As this was intended as a pilot study, the sample size was too small to give definite conclusions. However, the literature provided evidence that this power imbalance between Indonesian men and women has not gone unnoticed (Muniarti 1993, Mangunwijaya 1993, Istiadah 1995). Also, the data provided by the study supports the view that there is a power imbalance that can be indirectly measured by examining the occurrence of interruption in the conversation of Indonesian married couples.

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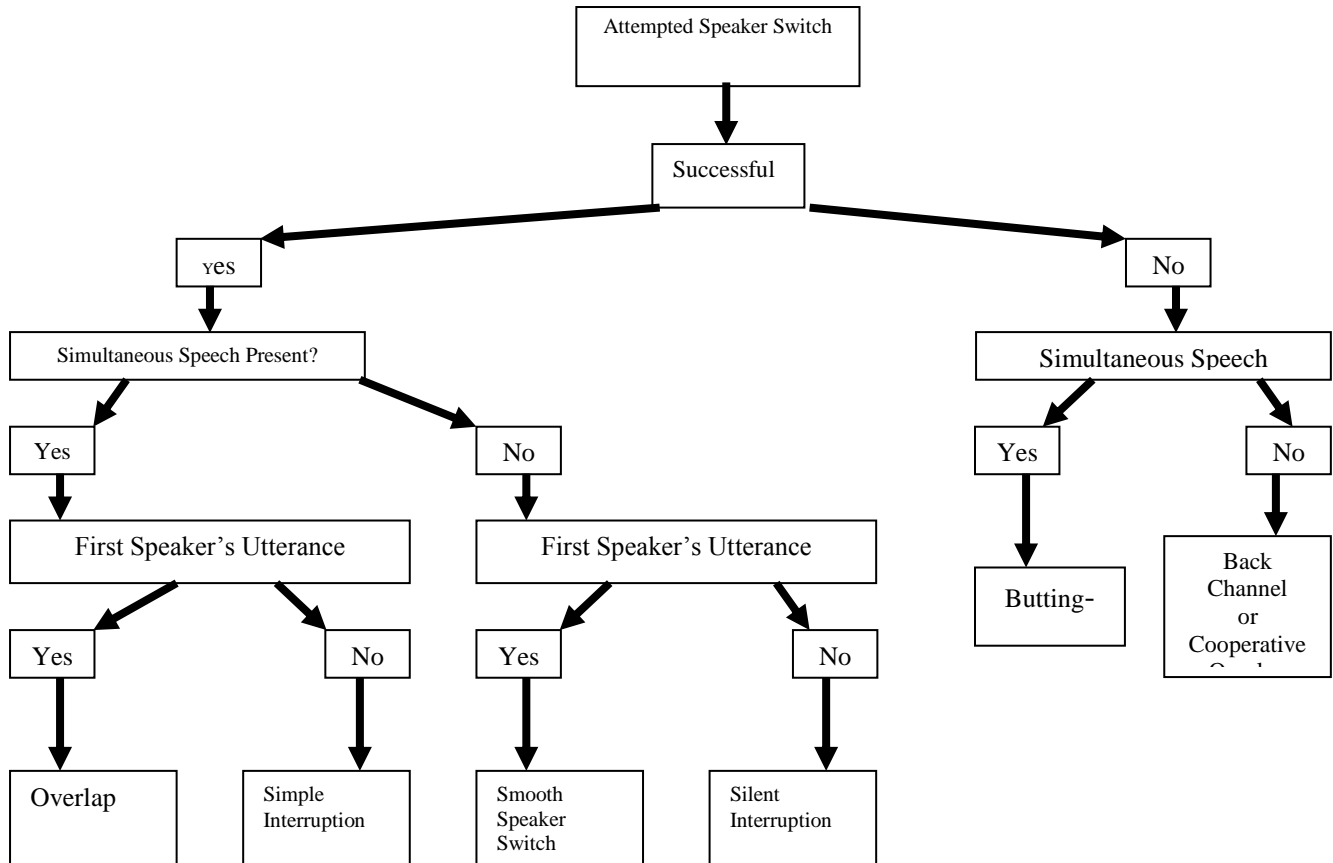
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Appendix

A. Appendix 1 Flow Chart Used to Classify Interruptions

These definitions and table were taken from Beatty (1981) and were updated to include Cooperative Overlapping. This was necessary in order to accurately categorise a form of interruption that did not fit into any of the existing categories.



Appendix 2 Notation Conventions

The majority of notation conventions used in all conversational transcriptions throughout the thesis (except examples in chapter Two from Hutchby, 1992) and in the eight transcriptions which make up the data, are those employed by Du Bois, Schuetze-Coburn, Paolino and Cumming (1990).

The conventions used are listed as follows:

(S)	Husband
(I)	Wife
Comma (,)	Continuing intonation unit
Full-stop (.)	Completed intonation unit
Exclamation mark (!)	Emphatic intonation unit
Question mark (?)	Rising intonation unit
@ @ @	Laughter
	Marks the beginning of the interrupter's speech
Two dots (..)	Brief Pause, not more than 0,2 seconds
Three dots (...)	Medium Pause, not more than 0,3 seconds
Four dots (....)	Used in examples in place of "...” to indicate some speech has been omitted.