



### Gendered Request Strategies Used by Bugis EFL Teachers in Indonesian Classrooms: A Sociocultural Study

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#### Abstract

*This study examines gendered request strategies in Indonesian EFL classrooms from a sociocultural perspective, focusing on how Bugis EFL teachers negotiate authority, politeness, and interpersonal relations through classroom requests. Drawing on sociocultural approaches to classroom discourse and pragmatics, the study investigates how local cultural norms shape teachers' interactional practices during English-mediated instruction. Employing a qualitative discourse-analytic design, data were collected through classroom observations, audio recordings, and semi-structured interviews involving four Bugis EFL teachers at a senior high school in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. A total of 360 minutes of naturally occurring classroom interaction were transcribed and analyzed thematically. The findings reveal distinct gendered patterns in classroom request realization. Female teachers tended to employ mitigated and relationally oriented requests through modalization, hedging devices, minimizers, and kinship-based address terms to maintain interpersonal rapport and participation. In contrast, male teachers tended to employ more direct and task-oriented request strategies emphasizing instructional clarity, efficiency, and classroom control. The findings further demonstrate that classroom requests function not merely as pedagogical directives but as socioculturally mediated interactional practices shaped by local sociocultural understandings of hierarchy, solidarity, and politeness within the Bugis cultural context. This study contributes to sociocultural approaches to classroom pragmatics by highlighting the importance of localized cultural meanings in interpreting classroom discourse and gendered communication in multilingual EFL settings.*

**Keywords:** *Bugis EFL Teachers, EFL Classroom Discourse, Gendered Communication, Request Strategies, Sociocultural Interaction*

#### 1. Introduction

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction in Indonesia is predominantly conducted within formal classroom settings, with English functioning not only as the target subject but also as the primary medium of instruction. Since opportunities to use English outside the classroom remain relatively limited, classroom interaction becomes a central site for language exposure, meaning negotiation, and pragmatic development (Duff, 2019; Gillies, 2015). Classroom interaction is particularly important in foreign language contexts because learners' access to meaningful English input largely depends on teacher-mediated communication and instructional discourse (Dagarin, 2004; Saito & Hanzawa, 2018). Within this instructional environment, teacher talk plays a critical role in scaffolding students'

participation, boosting classroom engagement, and ensuring continues access to linguistic input during the learning process (Gröschner et al., 2018).

From a sociocultural perspective, classroom interaction transcends a pedagogical activity; it also functions as a socially and culturally situated practice. Sociocultural approaches to language learning emphasize that language use is mediated by social interaction, institutional expectations, interpersonal relations, and locally constructed cultural meanings within particular communities (Kasper & Kim, 2015). In multilingual EFL classrooms, this means interaction is driven by much more than instructional goals. Instead, it is also influenced by local sociocultural norms that shape how teachers and students negotiate meaning, authority, politeness, and interpersonal relationships.

This study is primarily grounded in sociocultural theory, which conceptualizes language as a socially mediated and culturally embedded practice. From this perspective, classroom discourse is understood not simply as linguistic exchange but as social action shaped by cultural values and interactional expectations (Duff, 2019). Consequently, in EFL classroom interaction, teachers' requests function far beyond instructional tools used to organize activities and regulating participation. Rather they serve as a vital sociocultural practice through which authority, politeness, solidarity, and classroom relationships are continuously negotiated. Such a perspective is particularly relevant in culturally diverse educational settings, where English-mediated interaction continues to be influenced by local communicative norms.

In culturally grounded educational settings, teachers' interactional choices are often shaped not only by pedagogical objectives but also by sociocultural expectations regarding respect, hierarchy, solidarity, and interpersonal harmony. Classroom requests, therefore, serve as socially meaningful practices through which teachers negotiate both instructional authority and relational positioning. Previous studies demonstrate that politeness and interpersonal communication in institutional settings are closely connected to locally constructed cultural norms and gendered expectations (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015; Schnurr & Zayts, 2017). Within Indonesian intercultural communication contexts, relational sensitivity and culturally appropriate interaction are frequently emphasized in educational discourse (Aridah, 2021). In Bugis sociocultural settings specifically, kinship-oriented interaction and politeness marker's function act as vital resources for maintaining social harmony and respectful communication (Gusnawaty, Lukman, Nurwati, et al., 2022). These sociocultural orientations likely influence how teachers formulate classroom requests and manage interpersonal relations during English-mediated instruction.

A growing body of research has examined classroom discourse and teacher talk in EFL settings, highlighting the importance of interactional practices in facilitating learner engagement and classroom participation (Dao et al., 2021; Gillies, 2015). Within classroom pragmatics, request strategies have attracted considerable scholarly attention, as their realization is deeply influenced by contextual variables such as power relations, social distance, and degree of imposition (Safont, 2022). In classroom settings, requests function as important pedagogical resources through which teachers organize classroom activities, encourage participation, and maintain instructional control. Previous studies have demonstrated that teachers employ various request strategies ranging from direct imperatives to mitigated and indirect forms depending on institutional goals and interpersonal considerations (Thuruvan & Md Yunus, 2017).

Gender has also been identified as an important factor influencing communicative practices in educational interaction. Sociolinguistic studies suggest that male and female language use is socially constructed and shaped by community norms rather than merely determined by biological differences (Talbot, 2019; Tannen, 2021; Yoong, 2018). While previous sociolinguistic studies associated women's communication with greater use of politeness, mitigation, and relational orientation, men's communication has often been linked to directness and task-oriented interaction (Al-Harahsheh, 2014; Lakoff, 2017). Contemporary gender research, however, emphasizes that these tendencies are not innate characteristics. Instead, they are socially and culturally negotiated communicative practices that emerge within particular communities and institutional contexts (Petersen, 2018; Praminatih, 2021). These interactional dynamics often manifest in classroom discourse, where male and female teachers may realize instructional authority through different linguistic and interactional styles.

However, many previous studies on gender and classroom pragmatics tend to conceptualize gender as an isolated social variable without sufficiently considering the sociocultural contexts in which interaction occurs. As a result, gendered communication patterns are often treated as generalized tendencies, leaving the influence of local cultural norms on classroom interaction underexplored. Existing studies frequently rely on generalized politeness frameworks, that may not fully explain how interactional meanings are locally negotiated in multilingual EFL classrooms. Although politeness framework has been widely applied in classroom pragmatics research (Brown & Levinson, 1987), several scholars have criticized universal approaches to politeness for insufficiently accounting for sociocultural variability in interpreting authority, respect, and interpersonal meaning (Feng, 2017; Suparno et al., 2023). In multilingual educational settings, classroom requests may therefore carry culturally specific meanings that cannot be fully understood through generalized politeness models alone.

This issue is particularly relevant in the Indonesian context, which is characterized by extensive linguistic and cultural diversity. Within these diverse ethnic communities, the Bugis community in South Sulawesi is widely recognized for upholding sociocultural values related to hierarchy, respect, kinship, and social harmony. These values are frequently reflected in everyday communicative practices through the use of politeness markers, kinship-based address terms, and culturally appropriate interactional behavior (Hadawiah et al., 2025). As a result, such sociocultural orientations may also heavily influence how teachers formulate classroom requests and negotiate authority during instructional interaction.

Within Bugis sociocultural contexts, interpersonal interaction is deeply rooted in the foundational values of *sipakatau* (mutual human respect), relational harmony, kinship orientation, and culturally appropriate expressions of hierarchy and solidarity. Such values are often manifested through respectful modes address forms, relational interactional styles, and socially appropriate negotiation of authority in everyday communication. In educational settings, these sociocultural orientations may influence how teachers formulate classroom requests, manage interpersonal relations, and negotiate instructional authority during classroom interaction.

Recent studies on translanguaging and classroom pragmatics further suggest that multilingual classroom interaction involves continuous negotiation between global linguistic resources and local sociocultural meanings (Galante, 2020; Lin, 2019). Nevertheless, empirical research examining request strategies within the unique sociocultural context of Bugis teachers in Indonesian EFL classrooms remains limited. While existing studies in

Indonesian EFL contexts have largely addressed general politeness strategies, teacher talk, or classroom interaction, few studies explore how gender and local sociocultural values intersect in teachers' request practices. Consequently, our understanding of how male and female Bugis teachers employ request strategies as active sociocultural practices in EFL classroom interaction remains limited.

To address this gap, the present study investigates gendered request strategies used by Bugis teachers in Indonesian EFL classrooms from a sociocultural perspective. Specifically, it examines how male and female teachers linguistically formulate classroom requests and explores how these practices reflect local sociocultural values, such as authority, politeness, solidarity, and interpersonal relations, within the Bugis cultural context. By situating classroom pragmatics within a localized sociocultural framework, this study contributes to broaden discussions on gender, classroom discourse, and sociocultural interaction in multilingual EFL settings.

The study offers both theoretical and pedagogical contribution. Theoretically, it extends sociocultural approaches to classroom pragmatics by demonstrating how English request strategies are locally shaped by cultural norms and gendered interactional expectations. Pedagogically, the findings provide valuable insights for developing culturally responsive EFL teaching practices in multilingual classrooms where local cultural values continue to influence instructional interaction.

## **2. Method**

This study adopted a qualitative discourse-analytic approach to investigate gendered request strategies used by Bugis teachers in Indonesian EFL classroom interaction. This qualitative was selected because it prioritizes understanding how request strategies were linguistically realized and socioculturally interpreted within naturally occurring classroom interaction rather than measuring their statistical distribution (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study was further informed by sociocultural perspectives on classroom discourse, which view interaction as socially situated and culturally mediated practice (Duff, 2019).

The research was conducted at a public senior high school in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The school was selected because both the English teachers and the majority of students shared a Bugis sociocultural background, allowing the study to examine how local cultural values potentially shaped classroom interaction. In this study, the term "Bugis teachers" refers to teachers of Bugis ethnicity who teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesian secondary school classrooms.

Four Bugis English teachers (two male and two female) participated in the study. The participants were selected through purposive sampling based on several considerations, including a shared cultural background, active involvement in classroom teaching, and comparable teaching responsibilities. All participants taught second-grade classes and possessed relatively similar teaching experience in EFL instruction. Pseudonyms were used throughout the study to maintain participants' confidentiality and anonymity.

Data were collected through classroom observations, audio recordings, and semi-structured interviews conducted over approximately two months. A total of 360 minutes of naturally occurring classroom interaction were audio-recorded during regular English lessons. Classroom observations identified patterns of teacher requests and interactional practices, while the audio recordings enabled detailed examination of teachers' linguistic choices and interactional strategies during classroom discourse.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted following classroom observations to provide deeper insight into the interpretation of classroom interaction data. The interviews explored teachers' perspectives regarding classroom communication, politeness, authority, interpersonal relations, and interaction with students. Instead of functioning as an independent dataset, interview excerpts were selectively integrated as contextual evidence to clarify sociocultural meanings underlying teachers' request strategies to strengthen the interpretation of classroom discourse findings.

All classroom interactions were transcribed verbatim. To preserve their sociocultural meanings, non-English expressions, including Indonesian and Bugis linguistic elements, were retained in the transcripts before subsequently translated into English for analytical presentation. The transcription process on teachers' request utterances, including imperatives, modal expressions, mitigation devices, address terms, and other interactional markers related to classroom requests. These utterances were defined as any teacher expressions intended to direct, regulate, encourage, or elicit student actions during classroom interaction.

Data analysis followed adapted thematic coding procedures (Clarke & Braun, 2017; Saldaña, 2021). The analysis involved iterative coding procedures comprising open, axial, and selective coding to identify patterns related to directness, mitigation, relational orientation, and instructional authority in teachers' request strategies. The analysis further examined how these strategies reflected sociocultural values and gendered interactional tendencies within the Bugis classroom context.

The analysis was also informed by classroom pragmatics and sociocultural perspectives on interaction, emphasizing that request strategies should be understood not only as linguistic structures but also as socially situated practices shaped by cultural norms and institutional relationships (Kasper & Kim, 2015; Safont, 2022). Accordingly, gender in this study was therefore treated as a socially enacted and interactionally constructed practice rather than as a fixed biological category (Eckert, 1992; McInnes, 2016).

To ensure analytical rigor, the study employed data triangulation across classroom observations, audio recordings, and interviews. Repeated listening and iterative comparison across datasets were conducted to guarantee interpretive consistency. Additionally, formal permission was formally obtained from the school administration, and informed consent was secured from all participants prior to data collection. All data were anonymized to protect participants' identities.

### **3. Results**

Classroom interaction analysis revealed that request strategies employed by Bugis teachers in Indonesian EFL classrooms served as both instructional tools and socioculturally mediated interactional practices. Although both male and female teachers shared a common repertoire of classroom request forms, differences emerged in how these forms were interactionally deployed during classroom activities. These findings further indicate that teacher request strategies go beyond basic pedagogical purposes of classroom management and participation. They also reflected deeply ingrained sociocultural norms associated with politeness, authority, and interpersonal relations.

#### **3.1. Shared Classroom Request Forms**

Across the dataset, both male and female teachers alike employed a range of common classroom request forms to regulate participation, organize learning activities, and maintain

classroom interaction. These requests were realized through direct imperatives, modal expressions, politeness markers, prohibitives, and multilingual phrasings combining English and Indonesian.

Notably, both groups of teachers frequently relied on direct imperatives during instructional activities requiring immediate classroom action.

- (1) **T** : Open your book page thirty.  
**S** : Which page, Sir?  
**T** : Thirty. Finish the exercise first.

Both male and female teachers also employed modal expressions such as *can* and *could* to encourage student participation and responses during classroom interaction.

- (2) **T** : Could you repeat your answer again?  
**S** : About the application letter, Ma'am?  
**T** : Yes, please.

Politeness markers and multilingual expressions were likewise observed across both groups of teachers.

- (3) **T** : *Tolong* pay attention to the example first.  
(Please pay attention to the example first.)  
**S** : Yes, Sir.  
(4) **T** : *Kelompok saja dulu*, please discuss the answer first.  
(Just work in groups first.)  
**S** : Individually or in groups, Ma'am?  
**T** : In groups first.

The findings indicate that both male and female teachers utilized similar repertoire of classroom request resources necessary for instructional interaction. However, notable differences emerged in how these request forms were interactionally oriented and socioculturally enacted during classroom discourse. These distinctions are detailed in the following sections.

### 3.2. Female Teachers' Mitigated and Relational Request Strategies

Female teachers frequently employed request strategies that combined instructional directiveness with mitigating and relational resources during classroom interaction. Although direct instructional forms were also observed, these requests were routinely softened with modal expressions, hedging devices, minimizers, and kinship-based address terms that appeared to reduce interactional force and maintain interpersonal rapport.

Modal expressions such as *may* and *could* were frequently used when encouraging students' participation and responses.

- (5) **T** : Any volunteers to summarize today's material? Maybe the fourth group could explain the "appeal" section?  
**S** : About the appeal, Ma'am?  
**T** : Yes, please.

Hedging expressions and minimizers were likewise employed to encourage students to contribute more comfortably during classroom interaction.

- (6) **T** : Could you maybe share a little bit about your experience?  
**S** : It was a very fun experience when Mr. Majid taught us.  
**T** : Taught us.

**S** : Taught us.

Female teachers also incorporated kinship-based address terms such as *Nak* (“child”) when organizing classroom activities and interacting with students.

(7) **S** : *Per kelompok atau masing-masing satu, Ma’am?*  
(In groups or individually, Ma’am?)

**T** : *Kelompok saja, Nak. Silakan kalian kerjakan dulu.*  
(Just work in groups, Child. Please work on it first.)

**S** : Yes, Ma’am.

The findings indicate that female teachers did not rely exclusively on indirect requests. Direct instructional forms remained present during classroom management and task organization. However, these directives were frequently accompanied by relational and softening expressions design to minimize interpersonal distance and maintain supportive classroom interaction.

Interview data further strongly supported these interactional tendencies. Female teachers explained that softened expressions were intentionally employed to maintain students’ comfort and encourage participation during learning activities. One female teacher stated:

(8) “Students usually participate more actively when the teacher speaks more gently and not too directly.”

Another participant similarly explained:

(9) “Sometimes students become hesitant if instructions sound too strict, so I prefer to soften requests during discussion activities.”

These findings suggest that female teachers seamlessly blend instructional authority with relationally oriented interactional strategies. Rather than merely functioning as indirect requests, mitigation devices and kinship-based expressions act as vital sociocultural resources to maintain interpersonal harmony and encouraging classroom participation within the Bugis classroom context.

Furthermore, these interactional tendencies reflect broader community orientations that prioritize respectful connections. They also echo the Bugis cultural philosophy of *sipakatau* (mutual human respect). In this context, kinship-based address terms and softened request forms are much more than simple interpersonal strategies. They are culturally recognizable resources used to cultivate a respectful, engaging learning environment.

### **3.3. Male Teachers’ Direct and Task-Oriented Request Strategies**

In contrast, male teachers predominantly relied on direct, task-oriented request strategies that prioritize instructional efficiency, clarity, and classroom control. Their requests were typically as direct imperatives, obligation forms, and unmitigated directives.

These direct imperatives were frequently used to regulate classroom activities and ensure task completion.

(10) **T** : Submit your assignment now.

**S** : Individually, Sir?

**T** : Yes. Do it now.

Male teachers also employed obligation forms such as “*have to*” to emphasize instructional responsibility and task completion.

- (11) **T** : You have to finish the exercise before the discussion starts.  
**S** : Today, Sir?  
**T** : Yes. Today.

Prohibitive forms were likewise used to maintain classroom discipline and regulate students’ behavior during instructional activities.

- (12) **T** : Don’t talk first. Listen to the explanation carefully.  
**S** : Yes, Sir.

Unlike female teachers, male teachers rarely employed hedging expressions or kinship-based relational terms during classroom requests. Their interactional style emphasized clarity, efficiency, and instructional authority during classroom management and task organization.

Interview findings also supported this approach. Male teachers emphasized that direct requests were essential to maintain classroom focus and instructional efficiency. One male teacher explained:

- (13) “If instructions are too indirect, students sometimes become confused about what they should do.”

Another participant similarly noted:

- (14) “Direct instructions help maintain discipline and make classroom activities run more efficiently.”

These findings indicate that male teachers tended to prioritize instructional clarity and task completion through direct forms of classroom requests.

### **3.4. Sociocultural Dimensions of Gendered Requests**

The findings demonstrate that gendered request strategies in Indonesian EFL classrooms were not merely individual linguistic preferences but deeply socially and culturally mediated interactional practices sociolinguistics and language education. While both male and female teachers employed similar core classroom request resources, their interactional orientations differed significantly in terms of directness, mitigation, and interpersonal positioning.

Female teachers consistently employed more mitigated and relationally oriented requests through modalization, hedging expressions, and kinship-based address terms. These forms choices effectively softened the force of directives while maintaining interpersonal rapport during classroom interaction. In contrast, male teachers predominantly employed direct and task-oriented requests emphasizing instructional clarity, efficiency, and classroom management.

These interactional differences reflect broader sociocultural values associated with politeness, hierarchy, and interpersonal relations within the Bugis cultural context. Consequently, classroom requests functioned not only as pedagogical tools but also as socioculturally grounded practices through which teachers negotiated authority and managed classroom relationships during English-medium instruction.

**Table 1.** Gendered request strategies and their sociocultural orientations in Indonesian EFL classrooms

<b>Interactional orientation</b>	<b>Male teachers</b>	<b>Female teachers</b>	<b>Sociocultural interpretation</b>
Enacting authority	Direct imperatives, obligation forms, prohibitives	Mitigated directives (less frequent)	Authority appeared to be negotiated through instructional roles
Managing politeness	Minimal mitigation	Modalization, hedging, minimizers	Politeness appeared to function as interpersonal consideration
Constructing interpersonal relations	Naming students	Kinship-based address terms	Relational closeness appeared to be emphasized through interpersonal orientation
Regulating participation	Task-oriented directives	Mitigated and relationally oriented requests	Participation appeared to be encouraged collaboratively
Multilingual resources	Indonesian expressions for clarity and control	Indonesian and relational expressions for support	Interaction appeared to be shaped by local sociocultural norms

As summarized in Table 1, both male and female teachers employed shared classroom request resources; however, their interactional orientations differed in terms of directness, mitigation, and relational positioning. These differences suggest that classroom requests functioned not only as instructional devices but also as socioculturally mediated interactional practices shaped by local cultural values and gendered communication patterns.

#### 4. Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that classroom request strategies in Indonesian EFL classrooms are far more than mere instructional techniques for regulating participation and managing classroom activities. Rather, they serve as socioculturally mediated communicative practices through which teachers negotiate authority, politeness, interpersonal relations, and classroom engagement. Although male and female teachers shared a similar repertoire of classroom request forms, the way they enacted these forms showed distinctly different sociocultural orientations toward classroom communication.

Female teachers, in particular, tended to rely on mitigated and relationally oriented requests, suggesting that instructional authority in multilingual classrooms may be negotiated relationally rather than enforced solely through direct institutional control. The use of modal expressions, hedging devices, minimizers, and kinship-based address terms appeared to reduce interpersonal distance while preserving pedagogical authority during classroom interaction. Interview findings further supported this tendency, female teachers explained that they intentionally softened their requests to encourage student comfort and boost classroom participation. This finding aligns with sociocultural perspectives highlighting that classroom discourse is shaped by culturally recognizable communicative expectations and interpersonal norms, rather than institutional roles alone (Djalaluddin et al., 2024; Mahmud, 2018). Consequently, rather than signaling linguistic weakness, mitigation

functions as a crucial interactional resource for sustaining participation and relational engagement during learning activities.

The present findings also extend sociolinguistic discussions on gendered communication in educational settings. Previous studies frequently associate women's communication with politeness, mitigation, and relational orientation (Lakoff, 2017; Talbot, 2019; Tannen, 2021). Similar tendencies have also been identified in intercultural and Arabic-speaking contexts, where female speakers were found to employ more relational and polite linguistic strategies during interaction (Al-Harashseh, 2014; Aridah, 2021). However, the present findings suggest that such tendencies should not be interpreted as universal gender characteristics detached from sociocultural contexts. Rather, the communicative orientation observed in female teachers' requests appeared to be locally negotiated within the Bugis classroom context, where interpersonal harmony and respectful communication remain socially valued.

These interactional tendencies may also be understood in relation to broader Bugis sociocultural orientations emphasizing *sipakatau* (mutual human respect), relational harmony, and kinship-oriented social interaction. Within such sociocultural contexts, softened requests and relational address forms may function not merely as politeness strategies but also as culturally recognizable practices for maintaining respectful and socially harmonious interpersonal relations during classroom communication.

The use of kinship-based address terms further illustrates how local sociocultural values become embedded within English-mediated classroom interaction. Expressions such as *Nak* functioned not merely as lexical address forms but also as interactional resources signaling familiarity, care, and social closeness. This finding supports previous research suggesting that kinship expressions in Indonesian sociocultural contexts frequently function as politeness resources for maintaining relational solidarity and social harmony (Gusnawaty, Lukman, & Nurwati, 2022; Masruddin et al., 2023). The findings therefore suggest that English classroom interaction in multilingual settings remains closely interconnected with local cultural norms rather than operating as culturally neutral communication.

In contrast, the direct and task-oriented requests employed by male teachers reflect a different interactional orientation toward classroom authority and instructional management. The frequent use of imperatives, obligation forms, and prohibitives prioritize an emphasis on instructional clarity, efficiency, and task completion during classroom interaction. Interview data further indicated that male teachers perceived direct requests as necessary to maintain discipline and prevent instructional ambiguity during classroom activities. While previous research has likewise associated male communication in institutional settings with directness and task orientation (Baxter, 2017; Tannen, 2021), interpreting such directness strategies solely through generalized politeness frameworks risks oversimplifying the sociocultural meanings underlying classroom interaction.

Rather than functioning primarily as face-threatening acts, direct requests in the observed Bugis classroom context operated as culturally acceptable expressions of instructional responsibility and decisiveness. Within sociocultural environments where hierarchy and authority are socially recognized, direct instructional requests are rarely interpreted negatively by students. Instead, this instructional directness aligns with culturally recognizable expectations regarding leadership, hierarchical responsibility, and effective classroom management during institutional interaction. This finding therefore supports

critiques of universal politeness theories that overlook sociocultural variability in interpreting authority, respect, and interpersonal meaning (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Suparno et al., 2023). In multilingual educational settings, classroom authority is negotiated through culturally situated communicative norms rather than through universally fixed distinctions between politeness and impoliteness.

The multilingual dimension of classroom requests observed in this study also suggests that classroom interaction in Indonesian EFL contexts is inherently translanguaging in nature. Teachers' strategic incorporation of Indonesian expressions alongside English functioned not only to support comprehension but also to maintain interpersonal connection and sociocultural appropriateness during interaction. This finding aligns with translanguaging research emphasizing that multilingual classroom communication frequently involves strategic movement across languages to achieve both pedagogical and relational goals (Galante, 2020; Lin, 2019). Similar findings have also been reported in classroom pragmatics research showing that teachers' requests frequently adapt to learners' multilingual interactional practices during classroom communication (Safont, 2022).

The findings resonate with existing research highlighting the relationship between teacher interactional style and learner engagement in classroom settings. Relationally oriented teacher talk has been associated with greater student participation and interactional involvement during learning activities (Dao et al., 2021; Fawzi et al., 2026). Within this context, mitigated requests can facilitate more collaborative classroom participation, whereas direct task-oriented requests support instructional clarity and efficiency. The findings therefore suggest that both interactional orientations represent culturally meaningful pedagogical practices shaped by gendered identities, institutional roles, and sociocultural expectations.

Collectively, these findings suggest that classroom requests in Indonesian EFL settings should be understood as socioculturally situated interactional practices shaped by local cultural norms, gendered communication patterns, and multilingual classroom realities. By situating classroom pragmatics within the Bugis sociocultural context, this study contributes to sociocultural approaches to classroom discourse and extends current discussions on gendered communication in multilingual educational settings. Furthermore, examining teacher talk in EFL classrooms requires attention not only to linguistic forms but also to the sociocultural meanings through which classroom interactions are locally negotiated and interpreted.

## 5. Conclusion

This study suggests that request strategies in Indonesian EFL classrooms function not merely as instructional directives, but also as socioculturally situated interactional practices through which teachers negotiate authority, politeness, and interpersonal relations. Although male and female Bugis teachers employed similar classroom request resources, their interactional orientations differed significantly regarding mitigation, relationality, directness, and task focus. Female teachers typically employed more mitigated and relationally oriented requests through modal expressions, hedging devices, minimizers, and kinship-based address terms. In contrast, male teachers favored direct and task-oriented requests emphasizing instructional clarity, efficiency, and classroom control.

These findings further suggest that classroom interaction in multilingual EFL settings remains closely interconnected with local sociocultural norms and relational values. Within

the observed Bugis classroom context, teachers' request strategies mirror broader cultural orientations associated with hierarchy, solidarity, politeness, and interpersonal harmony. Consequently, the study reinforces sociocultural perspectives that support a localized approach to classroom pragmatics. Rather than relying solely on generalized linguistic frameworks, these findings highlight the need to interpret classroom interactions through culturally grounded interactional expectations, and communicative practices.

By situating classroom discourse within the Bugis sociocultural context, this study contributes to sociocultural approaches to EFL classroom pragmatics and extends current discussions on gendered communication in multilingual educational settings. These findings also offer pedagogical insight for culturally responsive EFL teaching practices in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms, where local cultural values continue to shape instructional interaction and teacher–student communication.

Although this study focused on single, localized institutional setting with a limited number of participants, it nevertheless provides valuable insight into how local cultural norms shape classroom communication practices in Indonesian EFL classrooms. Accordingly, the findings should be interpreted within this particular sociocultural environment in which the study was situated rather than universally generalized it across all EFL contexts. Future research can build upon this foundation by examining gendered classroom discourse across broader educational, linguistic, and sociocultural settings to further explore how local cultural values continue to influence classroom pragmatics, interactional practices, and teacher–student communication in diverse multilingual EFL environments.

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