Teaching English: A Study of Strategy Preferences among Male and Female

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Abstract

Various teaching strategies have been applied in English language learning, but there is lack of research in examines how teacher gender influences the preferences of strategies. This lack of knowledge can hinder the development of teaching methods that responsive to individual teacher characteristics. This study identifies differences in teaching strategies between male and female English teachers focusses on the influence of gender on the preferences of teaching methods in the context of Merdeka Curriculum. This tudy aims to describe the teaching strategy preferences used by each gender and understand how these differences can affect the effectiveness of classroom learning. Using a qualitative approach and convenience sampling method, four English teachers (two male and two female) were selected as sample. The data were collected through teaching strategy checklists, observation checklists, interviews, and anecdotal notes, then analyzed using interactive data analysis. The results showed each teacher has different preferences in teaching strategies influenced by students' needs, material needs, and classroom context. The application of various learning strategies can improve the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. This research is expected to provide more specific recommendations to support the development of teaching methods with students' needs, thus improving the quality of learning.

Kata Kunci: *English Teaching, Gender, Teaching Strategy.*

INTRODUCTION

The educational landscape in Indonesia currently implemented the Merdeka Curriculum, also known as "freedom to Learn" that aims to gives the freedom to schools, teacher, and students in learning independently (Sherly et al., 2020; Fajri & Andarwulan, 2023). The Merdeka Curriculum gives the flexibility to the teacher in choose the various teaching tools to be more adaptable to the needs of individual students (Zidan & Qamariah, 2023; Irsyad et al., 2024).The Merdeka Curriculum prioritizes in-depth learning of essential material and 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication (Alghamdi & Al-Ghamdi, 2021).

The transformation of the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum bound together with the increase of Complex context in modern education, in providing skills and knowledge that are relevant to the dynamics of today's society (Arini et al., 2024). Related to this context, English language education plays a crucial role in providing students with the skills necessary to succeed in a globalized world (Hunaepi & Suharta, 2024). English language teaching involves instructing individuals in the use of the English language. In many contexts, such as Indonesia, this is referred to as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and is integrated into the national curriculum to enhance the quality of human resources. The Merdeka Curriculum becomes increasingly important to understand how teachers are

adapting their strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners by using student-centered and engaging pedagogical approaches (Risna, 2023).

A study that highlights the differences in linguistic behavior between men and women impacting communication styles. Within the framework of the Independent Curriculum in Indonesia, limited research has explored how these gendered linguistic tendencies translate into teaching strategies. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on examining gender-related teaching preferences among English language teachers in a newly reformed educational context. The urgency of this study stems from the need to support more equitable and effective teaching approaches by acknowledging and addressing the potential influence of gender on pedagogical decisions, which can significantly impact student engagement and learning outcomes.

English language learning in Merdeka Curriculum integrates three main components of learning: objectives, steps, and assessment, which emphasize holistic and effective methodologies. In the implementation, English learning is designed to be relevant to the context of students' daily lives (Rizki & Soviyah, 2024; Latifa et al., 2023). Teachers have an important role in promoting project-based learning to engage students through curriculum development, teaching materials and innovative learning methods (Rachman, 2023). The transition to the Merdeka Curriculum has introduced new demands for teachers to innovate in their teaching strategies. These include differentiated learning, integrated learning, flipped classrooms, competency-based learning and active learning-all important determinants in student engagement and overall learning outcomes (Savitri et al., 2022). Effective English teachers must align their strategies with curriculum objectives while meeting individual student needs. However, teacher preferences often guide classroom strategies. Factors such as student circumstances, teacher abilities, and available resources also play an important role in shaping teaching approaches (Mustika & Wardah, 2021).

Regardless of the progress that has been made in teaching methods within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum, one important and often overlooked factor that influences teaching strategy preferences is gender. Research has indicated that gender differences significantly influence communication styles and teaching approaches in the classroom (Martina & Afifi, 2024). Despite the biological factors, these differences include psychological and social characteristics shaped by cultural expectations and norms (Amurwani, 2021). Male teachers typically emphasize direct communication aimed at achieving goals, while female teachers are more likely to focus on building rapport and creating a collaborative classroom environment (Eckert & McConnell, 2013; Martina & Afifi, 2024).

Recognizing gender-based differences is critical to understanding their impact on teaching strategies in Merdeka Curriculum. Previous research has shown that male teachers tend to prefer student-centered approaches, prioritizing themselves as facilitators in the classroom, while female teachers are significantly use teacher-centered methods and prioritize active transmission of materials (Mahmud, 2010; Artini, 2017). In addition, female teachers also often use more diverse teaching strategies compared to male teachers. While male teachers usually use structured and goal-oriented methods, female teachers are more likely to emphasize communicative and collaborative techniques (Yen et al., 2024). These gender preferences play an important role in shaping classroom dynamics and influencing student engagement.

Numerous studies have explored the impact of gender on teaching strategies within EFL contexts. The study by Mahmud (2010) show that gender significantly influences English language teaching, impacting classroom interactions and communication between teachers and students. The study conducted by Artini (2017) revealed female English teachers tend to employ a broader range of teaching strategies compared to Male teacher. The research by Yen et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of recognizing gendered preferences in instructional practices to create inclusive learning environments. Female teachers often demonstrated relational skills conducive to collaborative learning environments. While these studies provide valuable insights into gendered differences in teaching strategies, both worldwide and in contexts outside the framework of Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum, there are still significant gaps in the understanding of how these dynamics operate within the distinctive Indonesian education system, especially in schools at SMPN 2 Singaraja.

This study overcomes a significant gap by investigating gender-specific preferences among English teachers at SMPN 2 Singaraja within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on examining how male and female educators adapt their teaching strategies within this curriculum, a perspective that is still rarely addressed in the existing literature. It explores whether the preferences are in line with existing theories on gender differences in education. This research provides new insights into how teaching practices can be adapted to meet the needs of diverse students. In addition, this research also examines the impact of gender on classroom dynamics and student engagement within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum, a topic that has not been extensively researched before. The research aims to provide practical recommendations for designing inclusive teacher training programs that can address gender-specific pedagogical needs.

The research also has implications for policymaking, particularly in promoting diversity in teaching methodologies in Indonesian schools implementing Merdeka Curriculum. By achieving these objectives, this research aims to provide not only theoretical contributions but also practical insights that can improve English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching methodologies in the developing Indonesian educational context, while bridging the gap between existing research on gendered pedagogy and the practices in Indonesia's context. Through these objectives, this research contributes to the development of more inclusive and effective teaching methodologies to improve student learning outcomes in English language education as demanded by the Merdeka Curriculum. The aim of this research is ultimately to promote a well-balanced teaching approach that recognizes and capitalizes on the unique strengths of each gender, which enriches the educational experience for all students.

METHOD
Research Design
In this study, the researcher applied a descriptive research approach to explore the teaching strategy preferences of male and female English teachers, utilizing a descriptive qualitative method. This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of phenomena in their natural context through direct interaction with participants.

Research Setting and Time

This study conducted at SMPN 2 Singaraja on January 2025.

Research Subject

The subjects in this study were selected 4 out of 7 English teachers at SMPN 2 Singaraja, consisting of 2 male teachers and 2 female teachers, which in this school already uses the Merdeka curriculum. In the selection of subjects, this study uses a convenience sampling method, where subjects are selected based on who have availability at a certain time, or willingness to participate in this study.

Data Collection

To ensure the reliability and integrity of the data obtained, various data collection techniques were applied. To enhance the validity of each method, the instruments of the research are teaching strategies checklist and the observation checklist that reviewed by two experts in the field of English language teaching and curriculum development. Meanwhile, the interview guide was designed based on the results of the preliminary analysis of the data from the checklists and observations.

In the data collection process, the instrument that is Teaching Strategies Checklist was used, which was designed to identify the frequency and types of teaching strategies used by teachers. The development of this instrument referred to the guidelines of Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) and Giyoto (2021). To ensure the quality of the instrument, its content validity was reviewed by two experts using a number of key criteria listed on the following instrument validity grid.

Table 1. Instrument Validity Grid for Teaching Strategy Checklist

No	Category	Summary of items	Judge 1	Judge 2	Summary
1–10	Metacognitive Strategies	Planning, monitoring, evaluating learning	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant
11–16	Cognitive Strategies	Reasoning, analysis, help with tasks	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant
17–20	Social/Affective Strategies	Emotional support, motivation, collaboration	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant

Another instrument is observation check list, this checklist was used to record the observed teaching behaviors and classroom interactions of the teachers (Risna, 2023). To ensure the quality of the instrument, its content validity was reviewed by two experts using a number of key criteria listed on the following instrument validity grid.

Table 2. Instrument Validity Grid for Observation Checklist

No	Teaching Strategy	Focus Area	Judge 1	Judge 2	Summary
1–10	Project-Based Learning	Real-world tasks, collaboration, reflection	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant
11–19	Problem-Based Learning	Problem-solving, reflection, sharing	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant

20–25	Discovery Learning	Media, discussion, worksheet, presentation	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant
26–31	CALL	Digital learning environments and feedback	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant
32–38	Cooperative Learning	Group tasks, shared responsibility	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant
39–43	Active Learning	Grouping, questioning, feedback	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant
44–49	Integrated Learning	Student-centered, real-life application	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant
50–53	Flipped Learning	Video, discussion, facilitation	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant
54–56	Competency-Based Learning	Connecting knowledge, relevant practice	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant
57–59	Differentiated Learning	Learning styles, individualized tasks	Relevant	Relevant	All relevant

The interview guide was used to conduct semi-structured interviews with teachers in order to obtain an in-depth understanding of their teaching preferences, experiences and philosophies (Mustika & Wardah, 2021). In contrast to other instruments, the guide was developed after the initial process of data collection and analysis through the teaching strategies checklist and classroom observations. This essential sequential approach allowed for the development of interview questions that were specific to the themes and patterns identified from the previous data, enriching the quality and relevance of the data. The questions were designed to explore in more detail the observed instructional behaviors and strategies, as well as the underlying reasons for the instructional choices made by the teachers. Since the guide was based on previously collected empirical data, its congruence with the findings from the checklists and observations provided the basis for its internal validity (Miles et al., 2014). Thus, there was no need for a separate validity grid for this interview instrument. The interview guide plays a role in deepening the exploration of the main findings, for example by asking teachers' reasons for choosing or avoiding certain strategies and how they interpret the effectiveness of these strategies in the context of their learning.

This study used an inductive approach to data analysis, which included three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification (Yuliani, 2018). Data were obtained through research instruments to gain a thorough understanding of the factors that influence teachers' choice of teaching strategies. A descriptive qualitative approach was chosen as it allows for in-depth exploration of the phenomenon under study (Hall & Liebenberg, 2024). The participants in this study consisted of four English teachers from SMPN 2 Singaraja, consisting of two males and two females. They were selected using convenience sampling techniques, which is based on their availability and willingness to participate. The main focus of this research is to examine the differences in teaching strategies based on gender in the context of the Independent Curriculum.

The data analysis process refers to the interactive analysis model of by Miles et al. (2014) which begins with data reduction to filter out irrelevant information, followed by the presentation of data to organize important information so that it can be interpreted, then conclusion drawing aimed at identifying the tendencies of teaching strategies, and verification, which ensures that the results of the analysis are consistent with the research question. This stage was closed with the interpretation of the results using the relevant theoretical foundation. The data analysis of the research are analyzed using interactive data analysis as shown as the Figure 1.
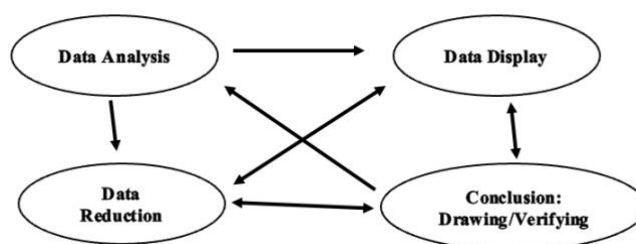

Figure 1. Interactive Data Analysis

By following these stages, the research aims to contribute valuable knowledge to the field of education, particularly regarding how gender influences pedagogical approaches in English language teaching within the context of Indonesia's evolving educational landscape.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Findings

After collecting data using research three instruments consisting of teaching strategy checklist, observation checklist, and interview guide, the results provides the preferences from the subject's point of view. In this instrument, data was obtained that Male and Female Teacher used almost all the strategies recommended by Merdeka Curriculum while teaching at SMPN 2 Singaraja.

Table 1. Applied Teaching Strategies Checklist by Male Teacher 1

No	Teaching Method	Teaching Strategy Indicators	Percentage	Note
1	Learning Strategy Training	15/15	100%	
	Metacognitive Strategy	7/7	100%	
	Cognitive Strategy	4/4	100%	
	Social/Affective Strategy	4/4	100%	
2	Project Based Learning	10/10	100%	
3	Problem Based Learning	9/9	100%	
4	Discovery Learning	6/6	100%	
5	Computer-Assisted Language Learning	4/5	80%	The lack of facilities hindered consistent applicatio

6	Cooperative Learning	7/7	100%	
7	Active Learning	5/5	100%	
8	Integrated Learning	6/6	100%	
9	Flipped Learning	4/4	100%	Enhance student access to learning resources by providing videos on mobile devices
10	Competency Based Learning	3/3	100%	
11	Differentiated Learning	3/3	100%	Recognizing that writing and speaking require different skills

The results presented in the table provide a comprehensive overview of various teaching methods and their corresponding teaching strategy indicators, along with the percentage of implementation success. Learning Strategy Training was implemented at 100% (Metacognitive Strategy (7/7), Cognitive Strategy (4/4), and Social/Affective Strategy (4/4)), indicates that teachers effectively utilized all aspects of learning strategy training to enhance student learning. Project Based Learning was implemented at 10% (10/10), this suggests that teachers consistently engaged students in projects that fostered practical application of knowledge. Problem Based Learning was implemented at 100% (9/9), which means the teachers effectively employed problem-based scenarios to facilitate critical thinking and problem-solving skills among students.

Discovery Learning was implemented at 100% (6/6), discovery Learning was successfully utilized by teachers to encourage exploration and inquiry-based learning among students. Computer-Assisted Language Learning was implemented at 80% (4/5), indicating that while it was largely implemented, the lack of facilities hindered consistent application. This highlights a need for improved resources to fully leverage technology in language learning. Cooperative Learning was implemented at 100% (7/7), promoting collaboration and teamwork among students. Active Learning was implemented at 100% (5/5), Active Learning strategies were effectively employed to engage students in hands-on activities and participatory learning experiences. Integrated Learning was implemented at 100% (6/6), indicating that teachers successfully integrated various subjects or skills into cohesive learning experiences. Flipped Learning was implemented at 100% (4/4), Flipped Learning strategies were effectively used to enhance student access to learning resources, particularly through the provision of instructional videos on mobile devices. Competency Based Learning was implemented at 100% (3/3), suggesting that teachers effectively focused on developing specific competencies in their students. Differentiated Learning was implemented at 100% (3/3), this indicates that teachers recognized the need for varied instructional approaches to address the different skills required for writing and speaking.

The results indicate a strong commitment from teachers to implement diverse teaching strategies effectively, with most methods achieving high levels of success. The only notable exception is Computer-Assisted Language Learning, which faced challenges due to inadequate facilities, underscoring the importance of resource availability in enhancing teaching effectiveness. Through Observation, Male teacher applied some activities such as:

posing a real-world question relating to recycle and upcycle, providing relatable examples from the classroom environment, assigning a project, ensuring students understood instructions, encouraging collaboration, and providing feedback to improve their work. Notably, the teacher also incorporated the traditional Grammar Translation Method by having students translate a dialogue.

Table 2. Applied Teaching Strategies Checklist by Male Teacher 2

No	Teaching Method	Teaching Strategy Indicators	Percentage	Note
1	Learning Strategy Training	12/15	80%	
	Metacognitive Strategy	5/7	71%	
	Cognitive Strategy	3/4	75%	Students are asked to use dictionaries in class, but they often forget to bring them
	Social/Affective Strategy	4/4	100%	Frequently used
2	Project Based Learning	5/10	50%	Frequently used
3	Problem Based Learning	5/9	56%	
4	Discovery Learning	6/6	100%	Frequently used according to material needs
5	Computer-Assisted Language Learning	3/5	60%	It wasn't always possible to use it because of the facilities
6	Cooperative Learning	7/7	100%	Frequently used
7	Active Learning	5/5	100%	Students with weak vocabulary skills make it difficult to apply.
8	Integrated Learning	5/6	83%	
9	Flipped Learning	3/4	75%	Sharing the videos proved ineffective
10	Competency Based Learning	3/3	100%	
11	Differentiated Learning	3/3	100%	

The results indicate a strong commitment from teachers to implement diThe results presented in the table provide a detailed overview of the implementation of various teaching methods and their corresponding teaching strategy indicators, along with the percentage of success achieved in each area. Learning Strategy Training was implemented at 80% (12/15). Within this category, the Metacognitive Strategy was implemented at 71% (5/7), indicating that while some strategies were effectively used, there is room for improvement, particularly as students often forget to bring dictionaries to class. The Cognitive Strategy received a 75% success rate (3/4), reflecting a moderate level of utilization.

However, the Social/Affective Strategy was fully implemented at 100% (4/4), indicating frequent use and effectiveness in promoting student engagement. Project Based Learning: was implemented at 50% (5/10), suggesting that while it is frequently used, there may be challenges or limitations in fully integrating this approach into the curriculum. Problem Based Learning with a success rate of 56% (5/9), shows moderate usage but indicates potential areas for enhancement in its application to foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills among students. Discovery Learning was implemented at 100% (6/6), demonstrating that it is frequently utilized according to material needs, effectively encouraging exploration and inquiry-based learning. Computer-Assisted Language Learning was implemented at 60% of success rate (3/5), indicating that its application is hindered by inadequate facilities, which limits consistent use in the classroom. Cooperative Learning was implemented at 100% (7/7), are frequently used to promoting collaboration and teamwork among students effectively. Active Learning was implemented at 100% (5/5). However, it was noted that students with weak vocabulary skills pose challenges to applying these strategies effectively, highlighting a need for targeted vocabulary support. Integrated Learning was implemented at 83% (5/6), Integrated Learning strategies are largely successful, though there may be opportunities for further integration across subjects or skills. Flipped Learning was implemented at 75% success rate (3/4), but it was noted that sharing videos proved ineffective, suggesting that adjustments may be needed to enhance student engagement with this approach. Competency Based Learning was implemented at 100% (3/3), indicating effective focus on developing specific competencies among students. Differentiated Learning reached a perfect score of 100% (3/3), demonstrating that teachers are successfully adapting their instructional approaches to meet diverse student needs. Erse teaching strategies effectively, with most methods achieving high levels of success. The only notable exception is Computer-Assisted Language Learning, which faced challenges due to inadequate facilities, underscoring the importance of resource availability in enhancing teaching effectiveness. The results indicate that while several teaching methods are effectively implemented, there are notable challenges in areas such as Project Based Learning and Computer-Assisted Language Learning due to varying levels of resource availability and student preparedness.

The Observations revealed that male teacher 2 primarily used Social/Affective Strategies, Competency-Based Learning, and the Grammar Translation Method. Social/Affective Strategies were implemented through motivational talks on discipline, cleanliness, and learning, along with humor to create a positive atmosphere. Competency-Based Learning was demonstrated by connecting new concepts to prior knowledge, linking information to student experiences, and providing relevant exercises. Furthermore, he applied the Grammar Translation Method through deductive application of rules, guiding students in creating example sentences based on grammatical principles.

Table 3. Applied Teaching Strategies Checklist by Female Teacher 1

No	Teaching Method	Teaching Strategy Indicators	Percentage	Note
1	Learning Strategy Training	14/15	93%	
	Metacognitive Strategy	7/7	100%	
	Cognitive Strategy	4/4	100%	
	Social/Affective Strategy	3/4	75%	Students lack prior experience in collaborating with native speakers.
2	Project Based Learning	8/10	80%	Frequently used
3	Problem Based Learning	8/9	89%	
4	Discovery Learning	5/6	83%	Frequently used
5	Computer-Assisted Language Learning	3/5	60%	Applied through zoom meeting
6	Cooperative Learning	6/7	86%	Just a few students are able to switch roles
7	Active Learning	5/5	100%	
8	Integrated Learning	1/6	17%	
9	Flipped Learning	3/4	75%	Simply asked questions about what was in the video
10	Competency Based Learning	3/3	100%	
11	Differentiated Learning	2/3	67%	

The table summarizes the implementation of various teaching methods and their success rates, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement. Learning Strategy Training was implemented at 93% (14/15). Metacognitive and Cognitive Strategies were fully applied (100%), while Social/Affective Strategies had a lower rate of 75%, as students lacked experience collaborating with native speakers. Project Based Learning are 80% success rate (8/10), showing effective engagement in practical projects. Problem Based Learning are 89% implementation rate (8/9), this method effectively fostered critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Discovery Learning applied at 83% (5/6), it was frequently used based on material needs, promoting exploration and inquiry. Computer-Assisted Language Learningwas implemented at 60% (3/5), its use was hindered by facility constraints, relying on Zoom meetings. Cooperative Learning achieved 86% implementation (6/7), though few students could switch roles in group activities. Active Learning implemented at 100% (5/5), engaging students in hands-on activities despite challenges with weak vocabulary skills. Integrated Learning was implemented at 17% (1/6), indicating difficulties in incorporating this approach into lessons. Flipped Learning reached 75% implementation (3/4), but asking questions about videos proved less effective for engagement. Competency Based Learning applied at 100% (3/3), focusing on achieving specific learning outcomes. Differentiated

Learning implemented at 67% (2/3), showing partial success in tailoring teaching to diverse student needs. In summary, while many methods were successfully applied, challenges remain in areas like Integrated Learning and Computer-Assisted Language Learning, requiring better resources and strategies to improve effectiveness.

Observation data confirms that Female Teacher 1 effectively uses the Social/Affective Strategy, Competency-Based Learning, and Grammar Translation Method. Female Teacher 1 motivates students before lessons, incorporates humor to create an engaging classroom atmosphere, and encourages self-reflection by guiding students to answer questions. In Competency-Based Learning, she connects new concepts with prior knowledge, integrates Present and Past Continuous materials, and provides relevant exercises to keep students active in learning. The female teacher actively provides activities that direct students to remain active in the learning process. Additionally, Female Teacher 1 applies the Grammar Translation Method through a deductive approach by asking students to form negative and interrogative sentences based on positive examples provided in class. These strategies collectively aim to enhance student engagement and comprehension.

Table 4. Applied Teaching Strategies Checklist by Female Teacher 2

No	Teaching Method	Teaching Strategy Indicators	Percentage	Note
1	Learning Strategy Training	11/15	73%	
	Metacognitive Strategy	5/7	71%	
	Cognitive Strategy	4/4	100%	
	Social/Affective Strategy	2/4	50%	Often applied
2	Project Based Learning	8/10	80%	Often applied
3	Problem Based Learning	5/9	56%	
4	Discovery Learning	5/6	83%	Often applied
5	Computer-Assisted Language Learning	4/5	80%	Applied sometimes because of limited facilities
6	Cooperative Learning	6/7	86%	
7	Active Learning	4/5	80%	
8	Integrated Learning	4/6	67%	
9	Flipped Learning	3/4	75%	
10	Competency Based Learning	2/3	67%	
11	Differentiated Learning	2/3	67%	Difficult to use with too many students

The table summarizes the implementation of various teaching methods and their success rates: Learning Strategy Training implemented at 73% (11/15), with Cognitive Strategy fully applied (100%), Metacognitive Strategy at 71% (5/7), and Social/Affective Strategy at 50% (2/4). Improvement is needed for the latter. Project Based Learning often

used with an 80% success rate (8/10), effectively engaging students in practical projects. Problem Based Learning was implemented at 56% (5/9), showing room for improvement in fostering critical thinking. Discovery Learningwas implemented at 83% success rate (5/6), promoting exploration and inquiry. Computer-Assisted Language Learning applied occasionally due to facility limitations, with an 80% success rate (4/5). Cooperative Learning effectively used with an 86% success rate (6/7), encouraging collaboration among students. Active Learning achieved an 80% success rate (4/5), engaging students in hands-on activities. Integrated Learning was implemented at 67% (4/6), with potential for further development. Flipped Learning scored 75% (3/4), effective but could improve student engagement strategies. Competency Based Learning moderately applied at 67% (2/3), focusing on developing specific competencies. Differentiated Learning scored 67% (2/3), challenging to implement due to large class sizes. In summary, while some methods like Project Based Learning and Cooperative Learning are effective, others like Problem Based Learning and Differentiated Learning need improvement to enhance classroom outcomes.

Based on Observation, Female Teacher 2 designs projects related to students' daily lives and emphasizes the learning process over merely focusing on the outcomes. Students comprehend project tasks are provided by Teacher's clear instruction, while analytical thinking is encouraged through listening assignments. The teacher also assesses students' abilities based on their engagement in discussions and presentations of their work. Female Teacher 2 diverse strategies aim to create a dynamic and enjoyable learning environment that keeps students interested and actively involved in their education.

Based on the data, both Male Teacher 1 and Male Teacher 2 utilize the traditional Grammar Translation Method (GTM) to fullfill the student needs. Male Teacher 1 focuses on translating literary passages, guiding students in dialogue translation, while also implementing Project-Based Learning to connect lessons to real-life scenarios for meaningful learning. In contrast, Male Teacher 2 emphasizes the deductive application of rules in GTM, directing students to create positive, negative, and interrogative sentences. Male Teacher 2 applied Competency-Based Learning by connecting previous material with new content. Both male teachers promoting a more student-centered approach that encourages active participation and achievement of learning objectives by implementing social strategies in their teaching to motivating students with jokes and advice. Female Teacher 1 also uses GTM focusses on deductive rule application and Competency-Based Learning to help students retain previously learned material. Female Teacher 2 applied Discovery Learning and Project-Based Learning. For the assignment, Female Teacher 2 provides learning media such as worksheets (LKPD). Both female teachers apply social strategies to motivate students and enhance engagement in the learning process. Female teachers tend to adopt a wider variety of teaching strategies and appropriate media to create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment. In contrast, male teachers prioritize structured approaches with clear learning objectives focused on specific language skills. These Result of the research highlight the impact of differing teaching methods between male and female teachers on student experiences and outcomes, undertake the importance of flexibility and diversity in educational strategies to accommodate varied learning needs

Discussion

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research suggesting that male teachers tend to favor structured teaching methods, such as the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), to achieve well-defined learning outcomes. the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), focuses on the accuracy of language use, which is often a major concern for male teachers in English language learning (Muliadi, 2022). Meanwhile, the findings of this research show that female teachers use more diverse learning strategies so that students are more adaptable to their teaching methods. This adaptability allows for a more inclusive classroom atmosphere, which encourages interaction between teachers and students. This aligns with research by (Zannah, 2024) that show female teachers often employ cooperative learning strategies, which promote collaboration and interaction among students.

Male Teacher 1 uses GTM by directing students to translate English sentences into Indonesian, to deepen the understanding of the text and strengthen the connection between the target language and their mother tongue. Meanwhile, Male Teacher 2 uses GTM through structured sentence construction exercises, guiding students to create positive, negative, and interrogative sentences, which reflects mastering grammar through a clear and structured approach. The results of which state that by providing structured vocabulary, GTM is effective in improving students' learning outcomes and grammar skills and assisting students in understanding basic concepts. Through the GTM method, teachers can help students understand the correct structure and function of grammar, which is an important aspect in building a solid foundation in language proficiency. This is consistent with the work of (Rahma et al., 2024) which highlights the effectiveness of GTM in enhancing students' grammar skills and understanding of basic concepts. The reflection of broader trends into this focus on the use of GTM, where male teachers prioritize learning objectives and dominate the learning process through targeted activities, is consistent with the findings of eckert and artini 2017, they show that male teachers prefer structured methods and concentrate on achieving learning targets, choosing strategies based on their effectiveness in facilitating student success. In using GTM, there are still challenges faced in its application related to Computer Assisted Language Learning (CAL) due to limited facilities. Male Teacher 1 sometimes uses whatsapp videos to apply Flipped Learning and gives varied writing assignments based on students' abilities as an application of Differentiated Learning. Male Teacher 2 also uses varied strategies but finds it less effective due to students' lack of interest and ability in learning English. Male Teacher 1 finds it difficult for students to understand English questions and inadequate facilities, hence Male Teacher 1 rarely uses Problem-Based Learning and CALL. Likewise, Male Teacher 2, citing students' difficulty in understanding English questions and inadequate facilities.

Based on the data collected through the research instrument, it was found that Female Teachers 1 and 2 implemented almost all strategies recommended by the Merdeka Curriculum. However, with limitations Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is limited due to inadequate facilities. The facility problem was overcome with WhatsApp videos and audios used as alternatives. The observation checklist revealed a similar preference for Learning Strategy Training, specifically Social strategies to motivate student engagement. Female Teacher 1 used Competency Based Learning and Grammar Translation Method, while Female Teacher 2 preferred Discovery Learning and Project Based Learning. Interviews revealed that Female Teacher 1 adapts to the material and students' abilities by

encouraging open discussion and linking the material to previous lessons by emphasizing Social/Affective strategies, Competency-Based Learning, and Grammar Translation Methods. In contrast, Female Teacher 2 prioritizes diversifying learning and preventing boredom by incorporating real-world examples and varied media through the application of Social/Affective strategies, Discovery Learning, and Project-Based Learning Differentiated learning is rarely used by Female Teacher 2 due to the large class size which hinders individual attention. Female teachers promote active learning through varied strategies, with Female Teacher 1 using Competency-Based Learning to assess recall, and Female Teacher 2 applying Discovery Learning through hands-on activities. This flexibility promotes student engagement and effective learning outcomes with adaptive teaching methods that support a dynamic and interactive classroom environment.

Research on the Exploration of teaching strategies reveals significant insights into how gender influences pedagogical approaches and student engagement regarding learning strategies implemented by male and female teachers. Based on the research, similarities were found between Male Teacher 2 and Female Teacher 1 in the application of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM). However, differences were also found in their teaching strategies, namely Female Teacher 2 emphasizes learning on varied activities that encourage students' active participation. The learning strategy is in line with research by zannah which shows that female teachers more often foster a more dynamic and interesting classroom environment using interactive methods that stimulate students' critical thinking.

Female Teacher 2 used the questioning technique to encourage student engagement. The strategy used is to encourage students to think critically so that students can be involved in the discussion. Thus, Female Teacher 2 creates an atmosphere conducive to active learning. This strategy is supported by Gillies & F. Ashman (2005) findings, which highlight the effectiveness of cooperative learning methods in improving student engagement and achievement. In contrast, male teachers, as practiced by Male Teacher 2, tend to focus on clear learning objectives by adopting a more structured approach. This often results in a more directive teaching style aimed at ensuring mastery of specific language skills (Hyde, 2014). Female teachers often prioritize creating a supportive and inclusive classroom environment, focusing on building relationships with students. Whereas male teachers tend to use more authoritarian teaching methods, as they perceive themselves as more of a disciplinarian (Sunderland, 2000). In addition, the results of the study indicate that female teachers apply a wider variety of learning strategies, so that students can more easily adapt to the teaching methods used. This ability to adapt creates a more inclusive classroom atmosphere and encourages interaction between teachers and students. On the other hand, male teachers tend to rely more on traditional methods that focus on delivering material rather than actively involving students. (Chudgar & Sankar, 2008).

This research providing nuanced insights into how gender influences teaching strategies and student engagement in English language education. This study highlights distinct pedagogical preferences between male and female teachers in the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum, contributing to a deeper understanding of instructional practices. These findings are valuable for developing targeted teacher training programs that address gender-based differences in teaching approaches. Educational stakeholders can create more effective professional development initiatives that promote diverse pedagogical practices tailored to meet the varied needs of students by integrating these insights. Despite its

contributions, this study has limitations, particularly the small sample size, which included only two male and two female teachers from a single junior high school in Buleleng, Singaraja. This limited scope may not fully represent broader trends across different educational contexts. Future researchers are encouraged to expand the sample size and explore additional variables, such as cultural influences or diverse educational settings, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of gender differences in teaching strategies. Moreover, investigating the role of technology in shaping teaching methods could offer further insights into effective pedagogical practices in contemporary classrooms. By addressing these limitations, future studies can build upon this research to enhance its applicability and impact on educational practices.

CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate that while male and female teachers have similarities in their teaching methods, they employ distinctly different learning strategies, which are significantly influenced by classroom dynamics and the specific needs of their students. Male teachers predominantly favour the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), a traditional approach that emphasizes structured grammar instruction and translation activities. This method allows them to focus on clear learning objectives, ensuring that students grasp fundamental grammatical concepts. This variation reflects a nuanced understanding of how to apply the same method while catering to different aspects of language acquisition. Moreover, both male teachers integrate modern pedagogical approaches such as Project-Based Learning (PBL) and Competency-Based Learning (CBL) into their teaching practices. By connecting previous lessons with new materials and directing students to engage in meaningful projects, they create opportunities for students to apply their knowledge in practical contexts.

This integration enhances student engagement by making the material more relevant to their lives. Females emphasize project-based tasks that foster engagement through Discovery Learning and PBL. Interestingly, both male and female teachers utilize social strategies to motivate their students effectively. Male teachers often rely on humor and behavioural advice to create a positive classroom atmosphere and encourage participation. In contrast, female teachers focus on providing motivational examples that inspire active engagement among students. This shared application of social strategies highlights the importance of interpersonal dynamics in fostering a conducive learning environment. Ultimately, the selection of teaching strategies by both male and female teachers is deeply rooted in an understanding of student needs, material requirements, and the specific context of the classroom. Although there are overarching similarities in their methods, each teacher tailors their approach based on these factors to enhance the learning experience. This adaptability is crucial in creating a dynamic and engaging educational environment that not only improves student understanding but also promotes active participation. By effectively combining traditional methods like GTM with modern pedagogical approaches such as PBL and Discovery Learning, teachers can accommodate a variety of learning styles, ensuring that all students can engage with the material in ways that resonate with their individual preferences. This comprehensive approach ultimately supports the goal of fostering an inclusive classroom atmosphere where every student can succeed academically.

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