

**LANGUAGE FEATURES APPARENT IN MALE AND  
FEMALE STUDENTS' WRITING ABOUT COVID-19'S  
EFFECTS ON THE SOCIETY**

**THESIS**



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WRITING ABOUT COVID-19'S EFFECTS ON THE SOCIETY

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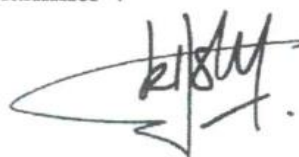
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## ABSTRACT

Hardiyanti, E. S. (2022). *Language Features Apparent in Male and Female Students' Writing about COVID-19's Effects on Society*. English Department, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Advisor: Prof. Dr. Hj. Zuliati Rohmah, M.Pd.

Keywords: language and gender, language features, students' writing.

This thesis analyzes the language features in male and female students' writing about COVID-19's effects on society using Karlsson's (2007) research findings. This study also discovered the language features in students and the different use of language features between male and female students. There are two objectives of the study to be attained. Those are: (1) To describe the language features that are used by male and female English Department students at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya in their writing; (2) To describe the differences of the language features that are used by male and female English Department students at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya in their writing.

The researcher applied the qualitative method because she used the students' writings which are verbal data. The researcher also used the prompts to collect the data. The data were collected by sharing the Google Form, which contains three assignment prompts for random students. The researcher only took 30 students from 34 respondents because she identified that the amounts of male and female respondents were not balanced. So, she took only 15 males and 15 females, which will be balanced in terms of the number of respondents. Then, the researcher sorted, identified, classified, and analyzed the data. The descriptive method was also applied to interpret the data that have been collected and analyzed before.

The study found 94 data from males' writing and 111 data from females' writing. The researcher analyzed ten language features of Karlsson (2007), but she did not find all of the features. In the males' writing, the researcher only found six features. Those are hedges, intensifiers, polite language, formal language, taboo words, and commands. Meanwhile, in the females, the researcher found eight features. Those are hedges, intensifiers, polite language, formal language, commands, words that are frequently used by women, tag questions, and minimal response. The intensifiers became the most used features in male and female students' writing. Considering the differences in the language features used, the females are more implicit in showing their annoyance. However, the males are more explicit about their statements.

## ABSTRAK

Hardiyanti, E. S. (2022). *Fitur Bahasa yang Tampak pada Tulisan Mahasiswa Pria dan Wanita tentang Dampak COVID-19 pada Masyarakat*. Program Studi Sastra Inggris, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Pembimbing: Prof. Dr. Hj. Zuliati Rohmah, M.Pd.  
Kata kunci: bahasa dan gender, fitur bahasa, tulisan mahasiswa.

Tesis ini menganalisis fitur bahasa dalam tulisan mahasiswa pria dan wanita tentang efek COVID-19 pada masyarakat menggunakan temuan penelitian dari Karlsson (2007). Penelitian ini juga menemukan ciri kebahasaan pada siswa dan perbedaan penggunaan ciri kebahasaan antara siswa laki-laki dan perempuan. Ada dua tujuan penelitian yang ingin dicapai, yaitu: (1) Mendeskripsikan ciri-ciri bahasa yang digunakan oleh mahasiswa pria dan wanita Jurusan Bahasa Inggris di UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya dalam tulisannya; (2) Untuk mendeskripsikan perbedaan fitur bahasa yang digunakan oleh mahasiswa pria dan wanita Jurusan Bahasa Inggris di UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya dalam tulisan mereka.

Peneliti menerapkan metode kualitatif karena menggunakan tulisan mahasiswa yang merupakan data verbal. Peneliti juga menggunakan formulir petunjuk untuk mengumpulkan data. Data dikumpulkan dengan membagikan *Google Form*, yang berisi tiga perintah tugas untuk siswa secara acak. Peneliti hanya mengambil 30 siswa dari 34 responden karena ia mengidentifikasi bahwa jumlah responden pria dan wanita secara keseluruhan tidak seimbang. Jadi, ia mengambil 15 laki-laki dan 15 perempuan yang akan seimbang dalam segi jumlah responden. Kemudian, peneliti mengurutkan, mengidentifikasi, mengklasifikasikan, dan menganalisis data. Metode deskriptif juga diterapkan untuk menginterpretasikan data yang telah dikumpulkan dan dianalisis sebelumnya.

Hasil penelitian menemukan 94 data dari tulisan laki-laki dan 111 data dari tulisan perempuan. Peneliti menganalisis sepuluh fitur bahasa dari Karlsson (2007), tetapi ia tidak menemukan semua fitur tersebut. Dalam tulisan laki-laki, peneliti hanya menemukan enam ciri, yaitu *hedges*, *intensifiers*, *polite language*, *formal language*, *taboo words*, dan *commands*. Sedangkan pada perempuan, peneliti menemukan delapan ciri, yaitu *hedges*, *intensifiers*, *polite language*, *formal language*, *commands*, *words that are frequently used by women*, *tag question*, dan *minimal response*. *Intensifiers* menjadi fitur yang paling banyak digunakan dalam tulisan siswa laki-laki dan perempuan. Mempertimbangkan perbedaan fitur bahasa yang digunakan, perempuan lebih implisit untuk menunjukkan kekesalan mereka. Namun, para pria lebih eksplisit tentang pernyataan mereka.

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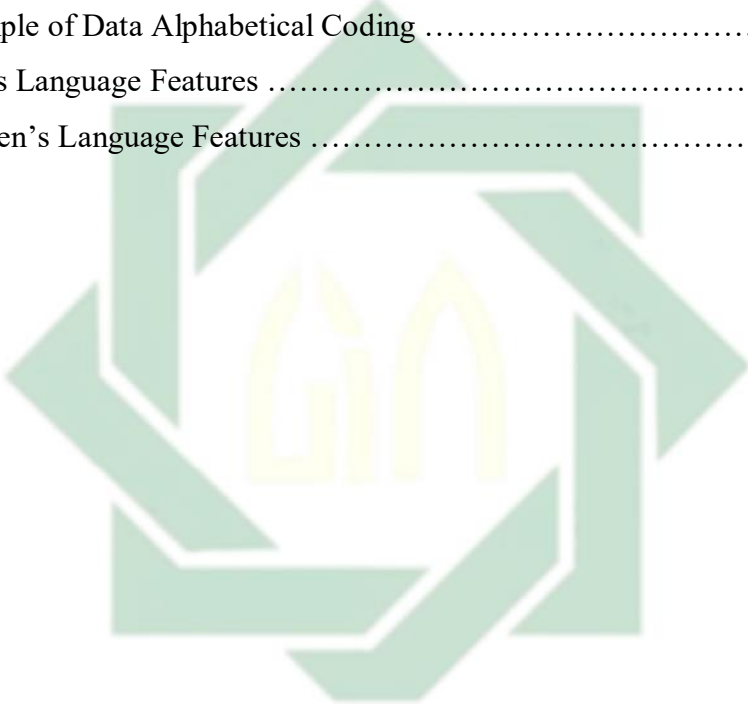
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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter consists background of the study, objective of the study, significance of the study, the scope and limitations of the study, and the last is the definition of the key terms.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Humans are created to interact and live side by side as social beings. They certainly need a tool to interact with one another. The device or media that helps them is language. Fasold and Connor-Linton (2006, p. 2) state that language is a unique feature of humans. Language allows humans to express their wants and needs in their diversity. Kemp (2018, p. 1) argues that several philosophies of language can enhance the interaction between people; these are language to express ideas, and language represents the world. However, Finegan (2008, p. 231) asserts that all languages historically come from the same language. Nevertheless, the language forms vary due to social, cultural, era, and maybe also gender differences that exist in society.

Sex and gender distinguish the use of language in humans. Those two things are often considered the same, but they are different. Coates (2004, p. 4) argues that sex directs at the biological side of humans. Meanwhile, gender is more directed at the social side, such as habits, identities, roles, expressions, speaking, and others (Holmes, 2012, p. 159). For example, men's and women's acquired the language

since they were children. Therefore, their first language was from their mother, but their communication method differed.

The ways of speaking of men and women are different because it is usually influenced by social status, education, family background, or social rules. When women talk, they tend to be passive, and men tend to be rougher than women (Nabilah, 2020, p. 1). Women are also usually underestimated in society when they speak (Cuellar, 2006, p. 2). The old society's rules about gender inequality see women are inferior and men are superior. For example, women may not ask questions, so they should accept, and women must not speak harshly, so they must be polite. Those discrepancies may take women to lack confidence when they talk. Because of the distrust of women in speaking, Robin Lakoff came up with a theory about language problems that are often faced by women, namely women's language features. Lakoff (1973, p. 45) argues that the existence of women's language shows that women are often still marginalized. Lakoff's (1975) discovery and discussion were focused on women's language, especially its features. There are ten features by Lakoff (1975). The features are intensifiers, lexical hedges or fillers, super polite forms, emphatic stress, hyper-correct grammar, tag questions, empty adjectives, rising intonation on declarative, avoidance of strong swear words, and precise color terms (Holmes, 2013, p. 302). Thus, along with the times, women who have the same social status, education, and age as men tend to be more confident, and they can organize their speech.

Besides finding women's language, there is also a finding in men's language. The men's language may differ from women's due to their various

characters and attitude. Johnson & Meinhof (1997, p. 8) argue that men's speech must be learned too. It is known as men's language features. One famous theorist who studies it is Jennifer Coates. Coates (2004, p. 86) argues that men's language features to review the language style and daily communication habits that men usually do. It has emerged due to the distinctiveness between men's and women's communication (Coates, 2004, p. 86). Then, Coates states that men's language features contain questions, minimal response, hedges, tag questions, commands and directives, swearing and taboo language, and compliments (Coates, 2004, p. 86). To sum up, Coates states that men usually dominate the interaction based on power for communicating. At the same time, the women prefer to interact with solidarity and support.

The change in people's acts and behavior in society has made new inventions and research in recent years, which develop men's and women's language as the research topic. Many researchers have analyzed the language features and one of them is Susanne Karlsson. She conducted research that analyzed both men's and women's language features. To prove her research findings, Karlsson undertook a study of 80 people, including men and women aged 14-17 (Karlsson, 2007, p. 4). In her research, Karlsson triggered a modification and combination of language features theory from several studies conducted by several previous researchers who also

studied men's and women's languages. Karlsson (2007, p. 16) observes that women's language features consist of intensifiers, hedges, tag questions, minimal responses,

polite language, formal language, and words that are supposed to be used more frequently than men. While men's language features from Karlsson's view are categorized into four. Those are strategies to control the conversation, minimal response to let the woman know that he is not interested in what she has to say, taboo words, and commands (Karlsson, 2007, p. 17). To summarize, Karlsson's research findings are in line with Lakoff's and Coates'.

In recent years, men's and women's language features have become interesting topics using different theories. Research on language features usually focuses on one sex, for example, only about men or women. Hence, the researcher finds several previous studies that discuss language features as the topic. Those previous studies are in the short stories (Hapsari, 2014), in the novel (Priyadi & Setiawan, 2015; Naflatunifah, Fazlina, Prayogo, Mardhia, Safitri, & Fidiyanti, 2017), in the movie (Dewi, 2017; Kurniawan, Thamrin, & Rina, 2020), in the talent show (Putra & Prayudha, 2019), in the talk show (Badari, Setyowati, & Widisanti, 2019), and in the youtube videos (Karjo & Wijaya, 2020). Based on several previous studies above, they use theories in line with Lakoff's. They collaborate with several views from other researchers like Coates, Holmes, Mulac, Tannen, and others. To sum up, the researcher develops this study using Karlsson (2007) in the students' writing.

Although many previous studies focus on language features, none has done a study using elicitation technique that focuses on what language features used by the students and the differences that may occur in male and female students' writing about the effects of COVID-19 in society. Therefore, of the need for innovative research to our knowledge, the researcher also uses the language features of Karlsson (2007).

The researcher examines several 7<sup>th</sup>-semester students of the English Department at UIN Sunan Ampel as the research subject. The researcher chooses them as the subject of research because the students are talkative to give comments about the happening phenomenon at this time. Along with the COVID-19 pandemic, the students have felt the impact of the pandemic, especially in the education, economic, and other sectors. So, the researcher uses the prompts to accumulate their responses about the effects of this pandemic to become her data for this study. Based on the explanation above, this study wants to discover the language features apparent and the differences in language features used by male and female students in the English Department of UIN Sunan Ampel. Furthermore, the researcher examines the language features with the research findings from Karlsson (2007). She also uses assignment prompts to collect the data from the students' writing.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

There are two objectives of the study that support this research. Those are:

1. To describe the language features that are used by male and female English Department students at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya in their writing.
2. To describe the differences in language features that are used by male and female English Department students at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya in their writing.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

This research is expected to convey and provide a more straightforward and precise explanation of the language features that appear in the English Department students' writing of UIN Sunan Ampel regarding the effects of COVID-19 in society. The researcher uses Karlsson's (2007) findings on men's and women's language features in this research. From the results of this study, the researcher hopes that the language features found in students' writing can give a new understanding to society that language is not limited by sex or gender and other factors. In addition, this research also uses a sociolinguistics approach. It is expected to be helpful for readers or other researchers to develop future research.

### **1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The researcher only examines the 7<sup>th</sup>-semester students' writing in the English Department at UIN Sunan Ampel as the research data. The researcher only focuses on selected students that have already given their written responses through the form of the assignment prompts. This research discusses and learns deeper about the words written by the students while responding to several

prompts. The prompts are related to the effects of COVID-19 on society. The researcher also uses a theoretical approach within the scope of sociolinguistics. Those are the women's language features and men's language features by Karlsson (2007). Later, this research only inspects students' writing, including words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. The researcher classifies what language features are used. Then, she also finds the differences in language features used by male and female students. To summarize, this limitation is intended to focus on the scope of the study that has been discussed.

### 1.5 Definition of the Key Terms

*Men's and Women's Languages* are arbitrary systems that men and women use to express their feelings through communication.

*Men's Language Features* are several different characteristics of men's speech in their conversation (Coates, 2004, p. 86).

*Woman's Language Features* is several different aspects of communication used by women when they speak to each other.

*COVID-19* is a new infectious disease discovered in 2019 and caused by the corona virus.

*Students' Writing* is an assessment of the students regarding a certain condition or situation and how to produce the language visually.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter contains several related theories that support the research. Those are language and gender, women's and men's language features, including the sub-chapters, the COVID-19 spread in society, and the last is students' writing.

#### **2.1 Language and Gender**

Language and gender are two different things interrelated in society's survival. Humans are differentiated by gender, while gender plays an essential role in their language style to communicate. According to World Health Organization (n.d.), gender refers to the characteristics of men, women, girls, and boys constructed in society, including norms, behaviors, roles, and relationships. On the other side, humans also began to learn the language when they were babies. Their first language is their mother tongue (Lakoff, 1975, p. 6). Over time, they will automatically produce their language style based on their respective gender. That statement is supported by Christie (2000, p. 12) describing that the way men and women perceive a given society depending upon the gender hierarchy. In conclusion, different values are assigned to men's and women's qualities, behaviors, and experiences.

Along with the development of the way men and women communicate, several linguists are interested in correlating studies related to language and

gender. Akhter (2014, p. 3) argues that the study of language and gender has been carried

out since the 1960s, and one of the famous theorists is Robin Lakoff. However, Mulyani (2014, p. 409) asserts that Otto Jespersen has come out of the study of language and gender since 1922. In his discussion, Jespersen acquired that women are more inferior in language than men (Mulyani, 2014, p. 409). After the two pioneer theorists came up with their own beliefs, the expansion of language and gender theory became more widespread. To summarize, the theory is divided into men's language and women's language.

Due to the development of men's and women's language, Deborah Cameron believes that linguists divide three frameworks to expand the study of language and gender (Cameron, 1998, p. 14). Those are 'deficit,' 'dominance,' and 'difference' theories that become each problem were raised by every theorist (Litosseliti, 2013, p. 27). The 'deficit' theory was carried by Lakoff (1975), which implies that men's language is superior or more substantial than women, then Thorne (1975) came up with 'dominance' theory and considered that men are inferior to women in using the language (Gu, 2014, p. 248). Meanwhile, the 'difference' theory by Cameron (2003) proposes that women are good at feeling and emotions when they communicate rather than men (Gu, 2014, p. 248). Hence, the difference in speech between men and women is like two different cultures that have mingled, so there may be misunderstandings one another (Cameron, 1998, p. 15). In conclusion, the theories about men's and women's

language in the language gender field are not always the same, but those theories can complement one another for further research.

## 2.2 Women's and Men's Language Features

Women's language was discussed by Otto Jespersen in 1922 and has become an interesting topic for several theorists. Then, in 1975 Robin Lakoff came up with the women's language features theory in her book, *Language and Woman's Place*. Jespersen was in line with Lakoff's opinion about women's language, which sees that women are inferior in using the language (Karlsson, 2007, p. 8). Women's language features discuss the differences in women's speech when they communicate with men or women (Lakoff, 1975, p. 8). In conclusion, Lakoff's (1975) book proposes ten features of women's speech.

The development of society and women's lives nowadays makes one theorist named Susanne Karlsson research with the same theory as Lakoff (1975), but she found a new invention. The new invention came up because the language changes in society also influenced women's speech, such as social class, age, and education level (Thorne & Henley, 1975, p. 17, cited in Karlsson, 2007, p. 9). Karlsson's (2007) women's language features findings are similar to Lakoff's (1975) theory. Therefore, it can be seen in her invention that Karlsson (2007) found some features which have the same understanding as Lakoff (1975).

Since several previous researchers came up with theories about women's language, the men's language is also slowly being researched. The previous

researchers examined women's language because they felt that women are the research objects with more implied meanings than men (Kiesling, 2007, p. 653). It is because men are commonly considered superior in controlling their language. Besides that, Johnson and Meinhof (1997, p. 8) state that the men's language must also be analyzed. One of the famous studies about men's language is men's language features. It discusses how males communicate with others and the opposite sex (Coates, 2004, p. 86). It is based on the differences in character between men and women, such as the chosen topics. Men prefer to talk about travel, sports, and hobbies, while women talk about feelings (Coates, 2004, p. 128). To sum up, it may also be the basis for the differences between men and women in communicating and responding to their interlocutors.

In recent years, the theory of men's language has appeared widely. Many researchers have researched men's language features. Besides provoking the new findings in women's language features, Susanne Karlsson also studied men's language features. In 2007 through her master thesis, Susanne Karlsson researched men's language and women's language features. Through her findings, she proposes several aspects. Those aspects are intensifiers, hedges, tag questions, minimal responses, words that are supposed to be used more frequently by women than men, polite language, formal language, strategy to control the conversation, taboo words, and commands (Karlsson, 2007, p. 16).

### 2.2.1 Intensifiers

According to Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.), intensifiers are adverbials that strengthen meaning and emphasize a phrase or sentence. Litosseliti (2018, p. 28) persuades that intensifiers are usually known as an act to reflect insecurity. Due to the development in society, the insecurity of speech not only occurs in women, but it can also happen to men. But, the intensifiers can also be used when we give a force detail in the rating to assess. When they use intensifiers, men and women emphasize what they have spoken. Karlsson (2007, p. 16) reports that the intensifiers in her research are: *so* and *such*. Besides that, several kinds of intensifiers can be classified, such as: *well*, *a bit*, *very*, *really* (Litosseliti, 2018, p. 28). For example: “*Such a nice boy!*”; “*I’m very happy today because it’s my birthday*”; “*He is so annoying*”; “*She just know a bit information*”

### 2.2.2 Hedges

Hedges are one of the language features that are indicated to occur a lot in women’s speech, but commonly hedges are also often spoken by men. Hedges are usually found in women’s speeches to convince their statements (Lakoff, 1975, p. 54). Comparing hedges between men and women, Holmes argues that women use hedges to provide an attitude of politeness about something that they do not know. In contrast, men are more likely to doubt the information they know (Hasanah & Wahyudi, 2015, p. 210). Hedges’ concept also shows that a person is less committed to the certainty of the information they have. Adopting Karlsson’s (2007, p. 16), she argues that hedges demonstrate what speakers mean and invite other people to

join the conversation. Hedges also help the speaker ensure the listener (Nabilah, 2020, p. 16). There are several kinds and an example of hedges. Those are: *I think, you know, sort of, perhaps I mean, I'm sure, I suppose*. Example: *I think she can go to the concert with us*

### 2.2.3 Tag Questions

Karlsson (2007, p. 11) observes that females use more tag questions than males because the males use strong language in their sentences. Because of the lack of confidence that usually happens when expressing their statements, men or women typically use the tag question to assert their claims. The addresser utters the question that generally makes the hearer confused to answer. Example: *Is Diana here?*

The addressee of the question above may not know the correct answer about where Diana is, so the use of tag question here to avoid the addressee's lack of confidence when answering the question. The example of tag questions such as: *"Is Diana here, isn't she?"*; *"I suppose not, but there are um- there are limits, aren't there?"*; *"But, they are so stupid right?"* (Coates, 2004, p. 130-131).

If the addresser's question is uttered like the example above, it does not confuse the addressee so that the addressee can answer 'yes/no.'

### 2.2.4 Minimal Responses

Karlsson (2007) claims that women and men have minimal responses in their communication styles, but the minimal response among men and women are

different. The minimal response is also one kind of women's specialty in conversation when responding to someone (Coates, 2004, p. 87). If women make a minimal response, they show their supportive action toward the speakers. In contrast, men make the minimal response to show that they are not interested in the conversation (Karlsson, 2007, p. 17). The minimal response words that men and women usually utter are: *Mhm..., yeah..., right...*

and this put her into a bit of a flap (*mhm*) so before she could do anything about this she had to pull forwards (*mhm*) in order to er to open the gates so she took the car out of reverse, put it into first gear (*yeah*) and pulled forward very gently (*yeah*). (Crystal & Davy, 1975, p.44 cited in Coates, 2004, p. 87)

#### **Figure 2.1: Example of Minimal Response**

From the example above, the responder's responses are in the bracket (*mhm, yeah*). It can be concluded that the responder seems to support the speaker and has no intention of interrupting the conversation.

#### **2.2.5 Words which are Frequently Used by Women**

Because of women's politeness when they speak, they usually use words that help them avoid harsh speech or something that could hurt someone. In this case, the researcher assumes that this feature is almost the same as Lakoff's (1975) "avoiding strong swear-words" because its function. It is used to make words gentler and weaker when they give satire opinion, so they may not be rude. Karlsson (2007, p. 16) states that women frequently use the words such as "Oh my goodness." That words function also connects the expression of the addresser to the addressee (Karlsson, 2007, p. 22). Meanwhile, Lakoff's (1975) 'avoiding strong swear words' is broader than Karlsson's (2007). For example: *Oh dear*,

*you've put the peanut butter in the refrigerator again.*

### **2.2.6 Polite Language**

The politeness between women and men may be different. Women are known as more polite than men when they speak. Women have been educated and required to be polite to everything (Holmes, 2013, p. 168). Polite languages are usually used, like “*please*” and “*thank you*” (Karlsson, 2007, p. 12). The word “*please*” is generally used to ask someone to help them or make an order. Meanwhile, the term “*thank you*” expresses appreciation towards someone who has helped or responded to them. For example: “*Please, open the door!*”; “*Thank you for your help*”.

### **2.2.7 Formal Language**

People usually speak the formal language when they meet older people or people they do not know yet. It shows that men and women often use formal language, especially from respectable circles or high society. In this case, the uses of formal language are almost the same as the use of ‘hypercorrect grammar’ in Lakoff’s (1975) theory. The formal language usually contains the standard verb forms (Holmes, 2013, p. 303). For example: “*I can not help you tonight*”; “*I will go there tomorrow*”

### **2.2.8 Strategy in order to Control the Conversation**

When men and women communicate, there must be someone who takes control of the conversation. Pakzadian and Tootkaboni (2018, p. 2) think that men usually control the conversation while women accept it. Nevertheless, it does not

always make the men the first role in the conversation. Nowadays, many women take themselves to be the first role in the discussion, so they also do the control.

Professor Joanna Wolfe from Carnegie Mellon University observes that women usually control the conversation by interrupting the interlocutors if they are being ignored or interrupted repeatedly (Maderer, 2020, para. 9-10). When interrupting, women are also gentler than men. Meanwhile, men's strategy to control the conversation is not to give feedback to the interlocutors. It also implies that they are not interested in the topic or feel disturbed. Karlsson (2007, p. 17) argues that it is the way to avoid the comments. The non-feedback and a reprimand in communication can automatically make the interlocutors fall silent and not continue the conversation.

### **2.2.9 Taboo Words**

In communicating, men frequently use taboo words in their utterances than women (Karlsson, 2007, p. 17). It is because men's languages are more substantial than women's. Women usually avoid rude/taboo words, and they prefer to say "oh dear, oh goodness" (Lakoff, 1975 cited in Coates, 2004, p. 97). On the opposite, men are more open in using language. They do not even mind using the words "sh\*t" or "God damn!" which can be categorized as taboo or harsh words (Coates, 2004, p. 97).

However, it seems just a stereotype spread in society because we can't predict how the language development among men and women nowadays is. In her study, Karlsson (2007, p. 17) affirms that taboo words are usually found in men's speech

to interrupt the interlocutor's speech or show that they are annoyed about the speech topic. The taboo words are: *Sh\*t!*, *God damn*

### 2.2.9 Commands

When asking for help from someone, men and women are different. Women tend to be polite using "please" or "let's." Meanwhile, men tend to use the commands. When they need help, men tend to be straightforward and to the point of their needs, while women use more polite sentences to their interlocutors. It is quite a noticeable difference between men's and women's languages. Karlsson (2007, p. 17) states that the examples of the commands are: "*Give some paper!*"; "*Hand me my sport magazine!*"

## 2.3 COVID-19

At the end of 2019, the world was shocked by a new infectious disease whose first case was found in a market that sells wild animal meat in Wuhan, China (Churiyah, Sholikhan, Filianti, & Sakdiyyah, 2020, p. 491). The infectious disease is categorized as a variant of pneumonia or respiratory system disorders (Gennaro, Pizzol, Marotta, Antunes, Racalbuto, Veronese, & Smith, 2020, p. 1). The disease is known as COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease) According to the World Health Organization (2020), COVID-19 is a new infectious disease caused by the coronavirus. Balkhair (2020, p. 1) believes that this disease is contagious, similar to SARS and MERS. It is because the transmission of the virus is classified as very easy to spread and occur. Moreover, the spread can be through

droplets and airborne, such as coughing, sneezing, and exhaling (WHO, 2020, p. 1).

Along with the ease of transmission of COVID-19, this certainly impacts the world's bustle, especially in the education sector. This impact does not only occur in public schools. Teaching and learning activities at universities are also affected. Rahiem (2020, p. 2) argues that due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the government has implemented social distancing rules and changed schools' learning online. It disturbs the students' activities which usually meet face-to-face and carry out activities in the laboratory with the teachers (Rulandari, 2020, p. 243). Thus, the existence of this disease does not only obstruct the education sector. Another sector like the economy sector may be disturbed too.

In addition, the public also feels restless with the spread of COVID-19 because it hampers their economy. There have been many reductions in employees, unemployment everywhere, and no income while life must go on. This problem is undoubtedly an exciting thing to be discussed by students. In this case, students are considered a group of people who usually express their aspirations and opinions on phenomena. Then, in their comments, several language features must occur that make the researcher want to conduct a study using theirs. Moreover, students are also considered the most critical and courageous community because their views or responses generally lead to policies issued by the government on how to deal with the impact of this infectious virus phenomenon.

## 2.4 Students' Writing

In social life, humans will face various problems in certain situations. These situations and conditions can positively or negatively impact society. Regardless of a particular issue or need, people are interrelated social beings and have the right to express their opinions. Thus, they usually give comments about what is happening around them, and it could be verbal or written.

In this case, people feel free to give comments, and they usually utter them by speaking or writing. It is because of the existence of social media. However, there are also lags in their writing, such as the writing style and ability which sometimes make others feel uncomfortable (Darwish & Sadeqi, 2016, p. 100). Their response to the events is also categorized as an interaction (Myers, 2004, p. 2). In this context, the thing that must be underlined is that the public's writing response is not entirely a fact because humans cannot be completely neutral. To summarize, writing is people's spontaneous action.

In connection with many events that have occurred recently, including natural and social events, almost all people give their responses based on their perceptions. This social interaction does not only occur among adults and specific communities but so do students. They usually do it through written comments. Students writing

could be just an opinion or even a neighborhood critique. It leads to a condition and strange things that people neighborhood do. According to Lippmann (1998, p. 69), the ability to eliminate superficial thoughts is to appreciate diversity. However, what happens in society is just the opposite. For them, the diversities in habits deserve comments and critique.

At the beginning of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic spread throughout the world. It causes many negative impacts on society. It also was not escaped by the comments and criticism of the public. One of those who are affected is the students. They are also a part of an educated adult community. They certainly do not escape from responding to all ordinary and deviant events in this pandemic era. As a millennial society, students are quicker to find new or deviant things worldwide during this COVID-19 pandemic. Sometimes, they are also active in responding to or criticizing the behavior of their fellow community members, which they consider deviant and detrimental to other human beings. In an educated society, these students' writing and criticisms are more organized and polite in language and delivery. Moreover, they are also more critical and easy to accept differences because each individual's nature and life habits are different.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

This chapter contains several procedural schemes to conduct the research. Those are: research design, data collection, which include (research data, data source, instruments, and data collection technique), and the last is data analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

In this research, the researcher applied the qualitative method. The qualitative method was conducted to observe the data based on the literature review that was referred to interpret the existing data in verbal written form. According to Chesebro and Borisoff (2007, p. 6), the qualitative approach sought to assist the researcher in explaining and analyzing existing social actions. Chesebro and Borisoff (2007, p. 6) also add that qualitative research presents the data in a description or verbal rather than numerical. The researcher also used a prompt to collect the data in the form of students' writing. Its role is to describe a situation in detail or briefly and determine whether it is acceptable or not for the participants (Stevens & Levi, 2005, p. 3). The researcher composed it in a Google Form. The descriptive approach was also adopted to interpret the data connected with explaining the data.

### **3.2 Data Collection**

This part consists of several arrangements about the way to collect the data of this research. Those are: research data, data source, instruments, data collection technique, and data analysis.

#### **3.2.1 Research Data**

The researcher took the data from the students' writing. The researcher chose the 7<sup>th</sup>-semester English Department students at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya as the research subject. The researcher did not put any criteria for the students to fill the prompt. The students were asked to respond to three assignment prompts about the social phenomena during the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, they wrote the responses in a Google Form provided. The data were available in terms of short stories or arguments. Those are in the form of words, phrases, or sentences adopted from the students' writing. The last, the researcher analyzed the data to identify what language features were used and the differences.

#### **3.2.2 Data Source**

The data sources of this research are the 30 7<sup>th</sup>-semester students of the English Department at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. The 30 students are selected randomly. The 7<sup>th</sup>-semester students of the English Department in this research referred to the class of 2018. There were 34 students who gave their responses, but the researcher only took 30 students randomly. This is because the total number of

English Department students in the class of 2018 is more than 100 people and the researcher feels that if all these students participate, there will be a spike in data that is too excessive to be used in this study. The amounts of male and female students were not balanced, so the researcher only took 15 males and 15 females to make the data balance. Therefore, the other responses from the 4 students left were not being used because the data amount would not be balanced if the researcher put them in. Those students were also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic from the education sector or economic sector. Each of those students also has a different attitude and response in dealing with several phenomena of this pandemic.

### 3.2.3 Instruments

The researcher applied the prompt as the instrument of the research. The researcher gave the participants a form that contained several assignments prompts about the social phenomena in society while this pandemic was happening. The researcher used prompts because it is an efficient way to gain written responses during this pandemic.

Then, the researcher made a *Google Form* to make the participants easy to give a written response. The link of form contained three assignment prompts. There was a marker in the form to distinguish the different sex of the participants. The researcher made it to get easier way to classify the data. The researcher hopes the participants write what they felt due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus in their surroundings; for example, in online learning, the spread of rumors that COVID-19 is a hoax and continuously extends The Community Activities

Restrictions Enforcement or CARE (re Indonesia: PPKM). To know the results of the study, the researcher identified the language features used to fulfill the data for this study and found the differences in the language features used in males and females. Then, the researcher categorized and analyzed the data. Last, she interpreted the data.

### 3.2.4 Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique for this research is sharing the *Google form*. It would be more straightforward as the explanation below:

#### 1. Sharing the *Google Form*

The researcher shared the link of the assignment prompt that already written in the *Google Form* through her *WhatsApp* status. Then, the random students filled the prompts with free answers. The researcher needed one week to get all of the data. This activity is carried out to collect written responses from students to obtain the required data.

Figure 3.1: The Google Form

### 3.3 Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the data in several steps. Those are sorting the data, identifying the data, classifying the data, describing the data, and drawing a conclusion.

#### 1. Sorting the Data

The researcher did this step after she had the data. First, the researcher organized the data based on the participants' sex. Then, she copied it into two different folders files on her computer to make her easier to sort the data. After that, the researcher sorted the data by highlighting different colors for each language feature. For example: hedges, tag questions, intensifiers, polite language, formal language, words are frequently used by women, minimal responses, strategy in order to control the conversation, taboo words, and commands.

#### 2. Identifying the data

In this part, the researcher only focused on the participants' written responses, which contain the language features. Then, she gave different marks/color codes on each feature to make it more efficient to identify the data. It can be seen in Table 3.1 below:

**Table 3.1. The Codes of the Language Features**

| The Features                         | Color Codes |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Hedges                               | Yellow      |
| Tag Question                         | Green       |
| Intensifiers                         | Red         |
| Polite Language                      | Purple      |
| Formal Language                      | Tosca       |
| Words Frequently Used by Women       | Orange      |
| Minimal Response                     | Blue        |
| Strategy to Control the Conversation | Pink        |
| Taboo Words                          | Olive Green |
| Commands                             | Gray        |

Here is also an example of the data coding for the language features that are found in the students' writing:

“Hmm... I think that public self-awareness in implementing health protocols is very important. With this self-awareness, the surrounding environment also gets the benefits. For example, the reduction in covid-19 cases, making other people aware, the country's economic situation recovering, and other good things will also improve over time and the public's awareness is high”

**Figure 3.2: Example of Data Color Coding**

(FL) (I)  
I am a person who really cares about health. And expect the vaccine to be found soon.  
(PL)  
Thank God I'm one of the people who got the vaccine early. When I got the chance to  
(I)  
get a vaccine, I was very excited, regardless of the news that might be "hoaxes out there.

**Figure 3.3: Example of Data Alphabetical Coding**

### 3. Classifying the data

The researcher classified the data and wrote the frequency by sex-based into a table. The researcher also put the identification result into the classification table. The table contained the language features, the codes, the data based on participants' different sex, and the total amount. As the table below:

**Table 3.2. The Classification of the Language Features**

| Language Features              | Codes | Men       |       | Women     |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
|                                |       | Data      | Total | Data      | Total |
| Hedges                         | H     | PSM 4/P 1 |       | PSW 2/P 1 |       |
| Tag Questions                  | TQ    |           |       |           |       |
| Intensifiers                   | I     |           |       |           |       |
| Polite Language                | PL    |           |       |           |       |
| Formal Language                | FL    |           |       |           |       |
| Words Frequently Used by Women | WF    |           |       |           |       |
| Minimal Response               | MR    |           |       |           |       |
| Strategy to                    | SC    |           |       |           |       |

|                          |    |  |  |  |  |
|--------------------------|----|--|--|--|--|
| Control the Conversation |    |  |  |  |  |
| Taboo Words              | TW |  |  |  |  |
| Commands                 | CM |  |  |  |  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             |    |  |  |  |  |

Note: PSM means Man Participant, while PSW is Woman Participant. Then, P means prompt. So, PSM 1/P 2 means Man Participant number 1 in prompt number 2, while PSW 2/P 1 means Woman Participant number 2 in prompt number 1.

After classifying the data into the table above, the researcher counted the features in students' responses into percentages. It is divided into two, including men's language features and women's language features. The formula can be seen below:

**Table 3.3. Percentage Formula**

$$FK \text{ rel} = \frac{FK}{\sum F} \times 100\%$$

Information:

- FK rel: Percentage frequency
- FK: Each type of features' frequency
- $\sum F$ : Total frequency of the features
- 100%: Percentage (Malik & Chusni, 2018)

#### 4. Describing the data

The researcher described the data to answer the research problem. Then, the researcher explained and illustrated the data through examples with previous studies and related theories to make more detailed findings.

## 5. Drawing conclusion

It is the last step that the researcher did after doing all the steps above.

Based on her findings and discussions, the researcher concluded with a clear and brief explanation.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This chapter contains the results of the study. The results of the study are about the language features used by the students in their writing, and the differences of language features used by the male and female students in their writing.

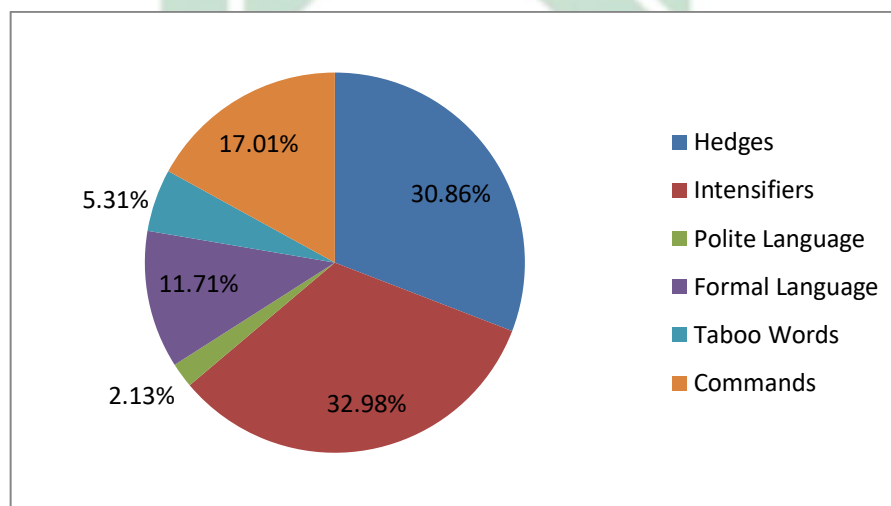
#### **4.1 Findings**

In this part of the report, the researcher aims to write her research findings to answer the study's objective. Considering Karlsson's (2007) findings, ten language features were analyzed in the students' writing, but the researcher does not find all the features. In the male students' writing, the researcher considers only six features. Those are hedges, intensifiers, polite language, formal language, taboo words, and commands. While in the female students' writing, the researcher finds eight language features. Those are hedges, intensifiers, polite language, formal language, words that are frequently used by women, minimal response, commands, and tag questions.

##### **4.1.1 Language Features in Male's and Female's Students Writing**

After analyzing the data, the researcher finds 94 data in the male students' writing. Therefore, only six features occur in the male students' writing. Those are

hedges, intensifiers, polite language, formal language, taboo words, and commands. Meanwhile, there are 111 female students' writing data with eight features. Those are hedges, intensifiers, polite language, formal language, words that are frequently used by women, minimal response, commands, and tag questions. Subsequently, the researcher counts the percentage of the language features, as shown in Figures 4.1 and 4.2 below.

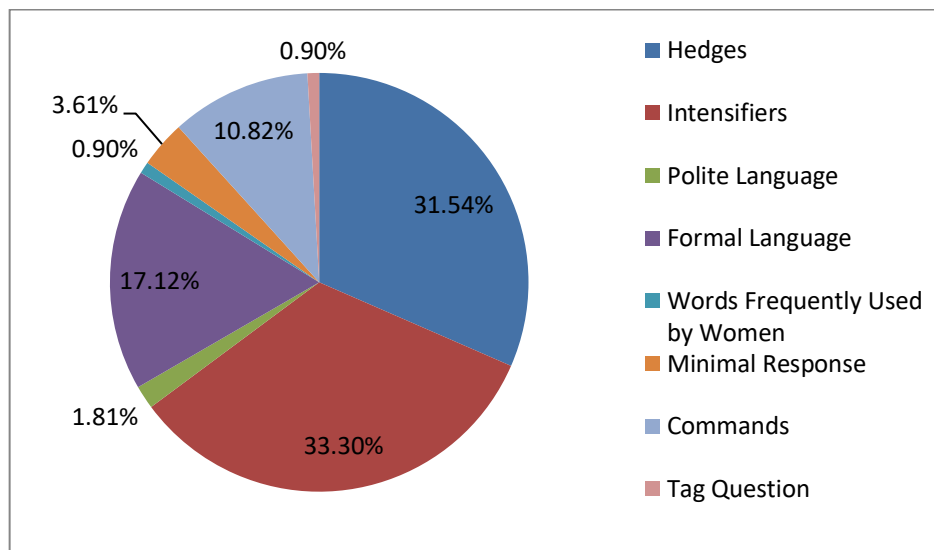


**Figure 4.1: Men's Language Features**

Figure 4.1 above shows the percentage of men's language features in the male students' writing. The feature that occurs the most is the intensifiers, with 31 data that prove that male students more often assess things going on. Not much different from the intensifiers, the hedges come up with 29 data showing that male students often doubt what they know. After hedges, there are commands with 16 data about the order habit that male students usually do. The males also use the grammatical correct when talking with others in the formal language, which appears with 11 data. Besides the formal one, the males are also

openly to use the rude feature like taboo words which rise with 5 data, and the last one with the fewest occurrences is the polite language which is only 2 data which show that males still be polite even they do the rude things.

Besides the occurrences of language features in male students' writing, the features that mainly exist in female students' writing are also the intensifiers that come up with 37 data. It means that the females also often give assessments when they speak or give a comment about something that happens. Then, the females are not different from the males who use hedges when they doubt what they believe. It can be proven in the apparent of hedges with 35 data. Compared with the males, the females are using more formal language to correct the comment in grammar with 19 data. Then, the females also apply commands feature in their response, but it appears fewer than the males with 12 data. The minimal response only appears on females' writing with 4 data because they usually use it when interested in the topic. Still, the males do not use it when they are interested in the topic. The apparent polite language in females' writing is the same as the males', which are 2 data. Besides the males using the taboo words to ridicule things, the females prefer to use words that are frequently used by women to give a subtle satire, but it only appears one data in females' writing. Last is the tag question, which also doesn't appear in males' writing because the females look like they need more clarification about their question than males, but the tag question only appears with one data. The women's language features chart can be seen in Figure 4.2 below:



**Figure 4.2: Women's Language Features**

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the feature that appears the most is the intensifiers. It can be proven that the intensifiers occurrence in male students' writing is 32.26%, while female students' writing is 33.30%. From the total data of men and women, which are about 205 data, the total intensifiers that occur are 68 data, men 31 data, and women 37 data. Even though they also use other features, male and female students prefer to use the intensifiers to assess what they talk about.

#### **4.1.1.1 Men's Language Features in the Students' Writing**

According to the data above, there are six language features in the male students' writing. Those are hedges, intensifiers, polite language, formal language, taboo words, and commands. The researcher intends to give the explanation and interpret the data that have been collected and analyzed as below:

##### **4.1.1.1.1 Hedges**

One of the language features that may occur in the men or women is hedges. Its concept shows that people know limited or specific information about what they say. Hasanah and Wahyudi (2015, p. 210) add that they hesitate about their knowledge when using the hedges. While Karlsson (2007, p. 16) asserts that the hedges function determines what the speakers mean and attracts other people to join them. There are several examples of the hedges that male students use in their writing, as below:

**Data 1:**

***In my opinion***, being affected by the current pandemic, I find it difficult to do online learning, because a lot of the information conveyed by the teacher ***in my opinion*** has decreased and also what I get is not comparable to what I get when I am in class, indeed since the corona virus has spread, inevitably we have to adapt to the existing conditions, but if it continues like this, I don't know how in the future this kind of education will continue or will continue to make changes that adapt to the times to come" (PSM 9/P 1).

The man participant above is expressing his opinions. Those opinions are purely from his impressions of online and distance learning. He argues that long-distance learning is ineffective because sometimes there are misunderstandings in receiving information. The researcher assumes that the hedges appear when he expresses his opinion about the ineffectiveness of learning programs during this pandemic. He is also concerned about the future world of education if things like this continue long-term. The statement states that he doubts what he believes because he only says his opinion.

**Data 2:**

“I **think** the one who comment that covid is hoax is mostly caused by lacking information because difficult to get access to the information. Another factor, this thing **may be** caused by the education and economic level other factor is someone say this is hoax because they get the information said that covid 19 is conspiracy from china” (PSM 7/P 2).

The man above states that people who believe COVID-19 is a hoax are lack knowledge and education. He also assumes that the economic factors are behind their belief. From the statement above, the researcher can conclude that the hedges that appear in the written responses above are when he assumes his thoughts, which are also not necessarily true. The words ‘I think’ and ‘may be’ in his answers help overcome his doubts in conveying the knowledge or information that he has and believes.

**Data 3:**

“The Government of Indonesia take this kind of Implementation on behalf of Indonesian people. Many Countries praise Indonesia for this because Indonesia is one of the best country in Handling this pandemic. I **know** it may affect the people economically so I suggest the government to allow people doing their job because money is fundamental but the government must give some penalties or punishment to the people who is having fun during PPKM” (PSM 13/P 3).

The written statements from the participant above state that the Indonesian government carries out the *Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat*, henceforth PPKM procurement during this pandemic is for the good of the people. Then, he also says that maybe this activity can affect the people’s economy. From the statement above, the researcher finds hedges when

he says ‘I know’. The words become the participant’s media to express information

that he does not know. He advised the government against people who violate the rules during PPKM.

#### **Data 4:**

“**Perhaps**, by continuing to extend the PPKM, the government is trying to prevent our community from getting infected with COVID-19. However, in the extension process, there is another new impact that our community will feel because of the PPKM being extended and making the community uncomfortable with the extension of the PPKM” (PSM 15/P 3).

The written responses above state that he believes the extension of the PPKM carried out by the government prevents the reduction of COVID-19 transmission in the community. He also continues that the process is uncomfortable for the communities. The hedges feature in the written statement above is marked by ‘perhaps’. The participant uses the word ‘perhaps’ to bridge the doubts about the information he has with his personal opinions. The term ‘perhaps’ also helps the participant not believe that his statement is correct.

#### **4.1.1.1.2 Intensifiers**

The intensifiers are the features that mostly appear in the male students’ writing for this research. The function of intensifiers is to emphasize what the speaker says. In addition, the intensifiers can be used by the speakers for assessing something they know. There are several examples of the intensifiers in the male students’ writing as below:

**Data 5:**

“Online study is **very very** changes my study method. I feel more lazy because I study at home. Home should be a place to rest, not a place to study, ...” (PSM 1/P 1).

The participant above expresses his impressions as long as he studies remotely during this pandemic. He also states that home is a place to rest. He feels stressed and upset about the pandemic, which has changed his learning methods. The researcher finds the intensifiers feature in the word ‘very’ written repeatedly in one sentence. The repetition of ‘very’ can be assumed that the participant has been disturbed by the situation, so he gives over-judgment.

**Data 6:**

“I feel like I can't follow the lessons **well**, because from the start I was used to offline classes, suddenly online classes took a long time to adapt. Moreover, I am not a person who likes to stay at home, I am a person who likes to interact with friends and also people who like to travel. I am a person who can be explained lessons face to face” (PSM 3/P 1).

In contrast to the statement from the previous participant about the emphasis in his opinion, which is repeated twice in one sentence, participant 3 states that he is unable to follow the lesson well because he is a typical person who likes outdoor activities. The researcher finds the intensifier feature in the word ‘well’. It is used by participant 3 to emphasize his inability because he has to adapt longer to new things.

**Data 7:**

“They are **very** easy to accept new information, get suggestions depending on their social environment. If he belongs to a Whatsapp group that doesn't believe in Covid-19 and a **lot** of information is not true, they will believe it. People who are exposed to **too** many hoaxes but are not accompanied by a critical way of thinking can also be consumed by incorrect information” (PSM 6/P 2).

The statement from the participant above explains that people are easily influenced by believing the hoax news on social media, especially about COVID-19. The researcher finds three intensifiers words in the participant's statement above. Among them are ‘very’, ‘lot’, and ‘too’. These three words serve to provide an assessment or rating and emphasize what they are talking about.

**Data 8:**

“I still hate the word PPKM. Because of PPKM, I was canceled for KKN outside the region. Even though at that time the covid had subsided a bit. but somehow suddenly covid exploded again in the media. Whether it's a setting or not. Whatever. But on the positive side, PPKM is also an effort to prevent the spread of covid. But why does the timing have to be when I do KKN? Ah never mind, I **really** hate PPKM” (PSM 1/P 3).

The statements in the third prompt above add that the participant hates words, leading to PPKM. Because of the existence of PPKM makes, university activities are canceled unexpectedly. The intensifiers in the written responses above lie in the word ‘really’. The word ‘really’ helps the participant emphasize what he feels about hatred for the holding of the PPKM.

#### 4.1.1.1.3 Polite Language

In language, men are often considered less polite in speaking than women. However, this statement is not absolute because men are also educated to be more polite in speaking to their interlocutors as time goes by. Polite language is one of the language features analyzed in this study. Polite language is to know people's manners in giving appreciation or requests. There are examples of polite language in male students' writing as below:

##### Data 9:

“If you don't believe in this Pandemic it's okay but keep it for yourself don't scare everyone with your statements. And to the people who don't want to be vaccinated. **Please** think twice. This is the only way to end this pandemic. Vaccinated is not dangerous. It may give you side effects at first but it's gradually gone and you'll become stronger” (PSM 13/P 2).

The second prompt that the researcher has prepared contains the participant's responses about people who believe COVID-19 is a hoax. The participant above expresses his disappointment. His disappointment is expressed by pleading to the communities to keep their beliefs and not provoke those around them. The polite language in the participant's responses above is in the word 'please'. It states the participant's request, which is spoken politely without forcing. It can be said to be polite because there is no coercion for the reader to follow what the participant wants in his writing.

**Data 10:**

“Therefore, if according to the government's assessment the problem of transmission of the Covid-19 virus is still not under control, for the good of the people, according to the PPKM government, Emergency must continue, **please** continue as long as it's fair. However, the government also has to help the people's economy, especially those in the lower strata with BLT (direct cash assistance), because the Emergency PPKM policy limits people's movement” (PSM 6/P 3).

The participant above states that the PPKM extension is good for the people. The participant supports this PPKM because it can limit community activities to reduce COVID-19 transmission. The government also provides economic alternatives assistance to communities. The polite language feature in the written responses above is ‘please’. It directs to the participant who asks the government to continue PPKM as long as they act fairly. It can be said to be polite because the participant does not force his will in his writing.

**4.1.1.1.4 Formal Language**

Formal language is usually used when people interact with the older or someone they do not know before. Holmes (2013, p. 303) assumes that formal language is generally used with standard verb forms without abbreviations. The formal language feature is used as a form to appreciate the interlocutor. In addition, formal language is commonly used by someone with high social or educational background. However, it also does not rule out the possibility that someone with a lower background applies good manners for speaking. There are several examples of formal language that appear in male students’ writing as follows:

**Data 11:**

“The existence of this pandemic has made me have to swerve from what was originally studying with books and direct interaction, turning into online learning which has to be full of staring at the gadget screen. More efficient indeed, but I feel there is a missing part, namely the character that is formed as a result of socialization with friends. As well as experiences that ***I did not experience because I could not leave the house***” (PSM 2/P 1).

The written response from the participant above states that this pandemic forces him to change his learning style, which tends to rely more on gadgets. In addition, he also feels that due to this pandemic, it is difficult for him to play with friends because he cannot leave the house. The formal language in the written response above can be seen in the bolded and italicized sentences. The researcher can say that the participant’s writing is formal because he prefers to write his response with complete standard verb forms without abbreviations.

**Data 12:**

“Maybe it depends on how people respond to the dangers of this corona virus, ***I am neutral in responding to differences of opinion about vaccines by the government which might be done to limit the spread of the corona virus*** so that it stops quickly and people can resume their activities” (PSM 9/P 2).

The written response above explains that the participant is neutral towards different opinions about vaccines. For him, the most important thing right now is how to stop the spread of the COVID-19, and people can carry out their activities as before. The formal language feature is found in italicized and bolded sentences. The participant prefers to use sentence structures following standard verb forms,

besides no rules on language style in writing responses to the prompts that are served.

**Data 13:**

“In my opinion, the government seems to be playing games with this policy, extending it every two weeks. This is quite a dilemma because there are people who depend on their daily work, if they have to stay at home, *they cannot fulfill their needs*, if they stay out of the house the chain of virus spread will continue” (PSM 2/P 3).

The participant above discusses the implementation of PPKM, which he thinks is a government game. So, people feel hesitant to stay at home or go out to fulfill their needs. The formal language feature is in italicized and bolded sentences. The participant may change his writing style from ‘cannot’ words to ‘can’t’, which is more relaxed to say, but he does not. Moreover, the researcher does not provide language style restrictions in capturing responses. The participant prefers to use ‘cannot’, which is usually used by someone to communicate formally.

#### 4.1.1.1.5 Taboo Words

The taboo words are usually well used by men. It is because men are frankly than women. Women avoid using taboo words and replace them with gentle ones (Lakoff, 1975 cited in Coates, 2004, p. 97). Besides that, men are also open to using words like “sh\*t”, “damn it”, or other words that belong to rude things. The taboo words are usually used to express their aggravation to the object. The researcher finds several examples of taboo words in the male students’ writing as below:

**Data 14:**

“Well, there are too many problem for me to study online like less physical interactive, internet connection, and not effective learning because we all just sitting all day in front of computer. It **suck** for me but, lives sometimes give us unexpected problem” (PSM 10/P 1).

The participant above states that online learning is ineffective and poses various problems. Then, he also feels cranky because these things are out of his expectations. The taboo word feature is found in words 'it sucks for me', which is slang that explains the chaos of someone's feeling because of the situation.

**Data 15:**

“I think it's a stupid thing and only people who have **shallow minds** like that, I can say that because there have been a lot of casualties and research done” (PSM 3/P 2).

The man above explains that people who believe COVID-19 is a hoax are shallow-minded. The researcher defines that what the participant says above is an insult, and it can be included as a taboo word because it may hurt the addressee. It is also caused by one of the factors where men are franker in expressing their annoyance towards objects they do not like.

**Data 16:**

“The last time I heard that Covid-19 has been mutated with the new variant called Omicron, after this all thing happen, I'm started to think that it's all **bullsh\*t**, Its okay to be vaccinated but its not lethal anymore so let the student feel how the new school is” (PSM 11/P 2).

Man participant 11 says that he receives information about the spread of a new variant of the COVID-19, which he thinks is nonsense. The researcher detects the taboo words in the ‘bullsh\*t’ word known as slang. The word ‘bullsh\*t’ is usually used to ridicule something and express disbelief. However, the word ‘sh\*t’ itself means a dirty word for ridiculing. That word is often used when someone feels very upset about something he does not like.

**Data 17:**

“In my opinion people who think that Covid-19 is hoax are **idiots**. This Pandemic has been killed many people's lives including the health workers. This even impacted the whole world not certain countries. All of people not certain people regardless their race, their job, and their background.” (PSM 13/P 2).

Man participant 13 above expresses frustration toward people who think that COVID-19 is a hoax. He ridicules them with harsh words because, in his opinion, this pandemic has claimed many lives, but why do people still think it is a hoax. The researcher discovers the taboo words feature in the word ‘idiots’, which can be categorized as a mockery. Mocking someone is not a good act because the word ‘idiots’ is also known as an abusive word, especially when used inappropriately or to ridicule someone.

#### **4.1.1.1.6 Commands**

People usually use commands for asking something. Commands can also be a suggestion to do something. Men tend to be more direct than women (Coates, 2004, p. 94). Men are more straightforward about what they want and need. In the

male students' writing, the researcher finds several examples for the commands feature as below:

**Data 18:**

"I don't follow this kind of people that believe Covid-19 is a hoax. But, there are always people in this world whose agree and disagree about something, for example like this Covid-19. But, for me I just don't care that much about them, **let them believe what they believe, we have to respect people's right**. But when it comes to violates our right, **we have to sue this**" (PSM 10/P 2).

Man participant above shows that he does not care about what people act and think about this pandemic. Then, the commands feature occurs when he proposes people choose their own choice and appreciate others' rights. Not only that, but the participant also asks others to join what he talks about. His suggestions can be categorized as commands because they beg someone to follow with no force.

**Data 19:**

"The last time I heard that Covid-19 has been mutated with the new variant called Omicron, after this all thing happen, I'm started to think that it's all bullsh\*t, Its okay to be vaccinated but its not lethal anymore so **let the student feel how the new school is**" (PSM 11/P 2).

Man participant above claims that he already knows the new invention of the COVID-19 variant, and he thinks all of it is nonsense. It is because people are already vaccinated. He also continues his statement and commands the government to allow the students to go to school again. It presents a request in soft directive commands.

**Data 20:**

“Therefore, if according to the government's assessment the problem of transmission of the Covid-19 virus is still not under control, for the good of the people, according to the PPKM government, ***Emergency must continue, please continue as long as it's fair***” (PSM 6/P 3).

The man participant above seems to agree with the implementation of PPKM in this country. Then, he also allows the government to continue the PPKM. The researcher identifies the commands feature when the participant asks the government to continue the program. The word ‘must’ seems a directive commands with little force inside. Then, he also adds ‘please’, which seems a soft directive. So, the participant above uses both soft and directive commands to offer his needs.

**Data 21:**

“Perhaps, by continuing to extend the PPKM, the government is trying to prevent our community from getting infected with COVID-19. However, in the extension process, there is another new impact that our community will feel because of the PPKM being extended and making the community uncomfortable with the extension of the PPKM. I can't say much, but what is certain is that ***let's work together to protect our families and those around us from Covid-19***” (PSM 15/P 3).

The man participant above gives a positive response to the PPKM. He feels that it was necessary to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Then, he adds that this program may cause discomfort for the community. Not only that, but the participant also invites people to protect their families from the COVID-19 virus. The suggestion above can be categorized as a commands feature determined as soft directive commands. The occurrence of the words

‘let’s’ seems that the participant asserts an invitation for the objects to follow him.

In conclusion, the male students above are expressive because they actively use the existing language features. The feature that is mostly used is intensifiers to assess what they feel. Then, the least feature they use is a polite language. Polite language is a commonly used expression to ask for help or make an order. Some features also do not appear in the male students’ writing. Those are tag questions, words are frequently used by women, strategy to control the conversations, and minimal response.

#### **4.1.1.2 Women’s Language Features in the Students’ Writing**

The researcher discovers eight language features in female students’ writing based on the data above. Those are hedges, intensifiers, polite language, formal language, words that are frequently used by women, minimal response, commands, and tag questions. Henceforth, the researcher also aims to explain and give several examples as below:

##### **4.1.1.2.1 Hedges**

Hedges are categorized as one feature that often appears in women’s speech. Women usually use hedges to assure their statements. Women also use hedges to implement their politeness toward their interlocutor. Besides that, according to Karlsson (2007, p. 16), the hedges function establishes the speakers’ mean and

persuades other people. There are several examples of hedges that the researcher has found in the female students' writing as below:

**Data 22:**

**"I think** in my own personal opinion, online school is not really effective for me. even the time and place is really flexible through online learning but still, there so many learning materials that's not enough to just explains it through the screen only" (PSW 9/P 1).

Participant 9 responds to the first prompt about learning at home during this pandemic. She argues that it is not effective because she finds many difficulties during learning at home. The hedges feature can be seen in the words 'I think' and 'in my personal opinion'. When she uses those words, the woman participant above reveals what she knows and tries politeness when persuading others to believe what she means.

**Data 23:**

"Hmmm I do not have any comments about the people's thoughts. **You know** that you cannot change the people's perceptions, right? So, in case the covid-19 is hoax or not, we should be vaccinated first as one of the efforts of decreasing the spread of covid-19. Besides that, we must pray for the loss of covid-19" (PSW 5/P 2).

Participant 5 shows her reaction when she knows that there are people who still believe that COVID-19 is a hoax. She adds that she does not care about people's thoughts because she thinks everyone has their rights. She also engages others to pray for the end of COVID-19. In the written response above, the hedges feature is in the word 'you know'. The participant above shows her confidence that people must respect others' rights. Her statement above suits the hedges function that Coates proposes. Coates (2004, p. 88) argues that

women use 'you know' to express their confidence, but it will be less used when uncertain.

**Data 24:**

"Covid-19 exists even though the virus cannot be seen directly with the eyes, but we can see the characteristics of people affected by COVID-19. However, people affected by COVID-19 do not all experience the symptoms and side effects of the virus. Many vaccines **may** confuse people about which vaccine is more effective, and there **may be** confusing news about the raw materials to make the vaccine" (PSW 14/P 2).

The woman participant above explains the communities who do not understand COVID-19 because they have never been infected or affected directly. Then, the vaccines also confuse them because of the limited information they have gotten. The hedges feature in the written response above is found in 'may' and 'maybe'. These words describe the participant's condition, which seems unsure about her statements. Women prefer to use hedges, too, when they offer uncertainty.

**Data 25:**

"**Maybe** with the extended PPKM it will suppress the growth rate of covid. But also make many people protest against the policy. **I think** this policy can reduce the number of covid in Indonesia" (PSW 4/P 3).

The woman participant above argues that the PPKM policy will reduce the number of COVID-19 in Indonesia. However, there are also pro-cons, including the increasing number of complaints from the public. The participant uses 'maybe'

and 'I think', which can be categorized as hedges words. The participant uses the words 'maybe' and 'I think' to apply her politeness in expressing opinions and bridging the uncertainty of her information. So, she prefers to use 'I think' rather than 'I know'.

#### 4.1.1.2.2 Intensifiers

Women are more interactive in speaking than men. Women also often emphasize what they believe or feel. Not infrequently, they also assess the object that they are dealing with. It is because they are heavily qualified for something. In this study, the researcher finds several examples of intensifiers that appear in female students' writing, which include:

#### Data 26:

“Yeah, this pandemic makes the learning activities to be the 'passive' activities. I experienced that when I was studying through online platforms. There was a few question-answer session because many students felt bored and also the connection was not **well** enough. Although I tried to make the class alive, it did not go **well**” (PSW 5/P 1).

The woman participant above explains that studying at home is tedious, and many obstacles are encountered, especially the internet connection problem. The intensifiers in the written responses above are marked by the word ‘well’. The participant uses the word ‘well’ to assess her current situation. She points out that the circumstances and efforts that she has been described above are not like her expectation.

**Data 27:**

“It's hurt Me **so** much. Because the economy of my family is **so** Bad, I lost my grandpa at the first covid came to Indonesia. And all of people in my village blamed Me because I was from Surabaya. My family and I may not go out from my house. People left us. They think my grandpa was Corona. But no my grandpa only had problem with his lung not Corona” (PSW 11/P 1).

The woman participant above tells about COVID-19, which has aggravated her family's mental. It is because the people around stayed away from her family due to her grandfather's death. These people think that the grandfather was infected by COVID-19. The researcher finds the intensifiers in the word 'so' in the written response above. The participant uses the word 'so' to give a description and an assessment of her current situation.

**Data 28:**

“As far as I'm concerned, there are **a lot** of reasons that cause people to think that covid is a lie. Those who think that way are likely to be provoked or get trigger by the talk of others. Like my neighbor says that a vaccine used pigs so that predominantly Muslim citizens would be hesitant to do the vaccine” (PSW 13/P 2).

The woman participant above explains various reasons about people who refuse to be vaccinated. One of them is because they believe that the vaccine contains pork that is prohibited in Islam. The researcher identifies the intensifiers feature in the word 'a lot'. The word 'a lot' presents that the participant gives an assessment and tells about the number of objects she means in the written response above.

**Data 29:**

“In my opinion, PPKM is **very** important to reduce the spread of the virus. But it must **really** be done and no one violates it. The government should tighten the rules and organize PPKM at the right time. If the percentage of covid decreases, PPKM must be abolished. Also, If PPKM is held continuously, it will be disserve to the community as **well**” (PSW 1/P 3).

The written responses above explain the agreement on the implementation of PPKM. She is one of the people who agree with the implementation of PPKM because she believes that PPKM can reduce the spread of COVID-19. She also adds that the government must continue it for the common good. From the written statement above, the researcher finds verb forms of intensifiers. The intensifiers features are found in words 'really', 'very', and 'well', which emphasize and personal assessment of the seriousness about what participant believes. In addition, the intensifiers above are also used to state the force details in expressing her opinion.

**4.1.1.2.3 Polite Language**

Men and women may be different for giving politeness towards interlocutors. Women are usually more polite than men because women are always required to be polite to anyone (Holmes, 2013, p. 168). Because of that, women often apply polite language in their speech, especially for asking someone to help them, make an order, and say thank you to others. In this research, the researcher finds several examples of the polite language that are developed on female students' writing as below:

**Data 30:**

“I am a person who really cares about health. And expect the vaccine to be found soon. **Thank God** I'm one of the people who got the vaccine early. When I got the chance to get a vaccine, I was very excited, regardless of the news that might be "hoaxes out there. When it was vaccinated, many friends still underestimated the vaccine. But like it or not, they have to be vaccinated for this requirement, wkwkwk” (PSW 3/P 2).

The participant above conveys her response about people who believe that COVID-19 is a hoax. The participant above disagrees about it, and she is grateful that she has been vaccinated. She says that many people around her think that COVID-19 is a hoax, and they refuse to be vaccinated. The woman above also expresses her happiness when the government makes vaccination the main requirement for doing anything. It means that her friends have to be willing to be vaccinated. From the written statement above, the researcher finds one verb form categorized as polite language. This feature is found in the words ‘thank god’. It shows the participant’s gratitude because God already grants her wishes. In the statement above, the participant does not ask anyone for help, but with a sense of politeness that she might have gotten used to, she thanks God for granting what she wishes.

**Data 31:**

“I think to reduce people to socializing with each other, is good to apply PPKM rule in indonesia. however, the government should also think about the side effects for doing this kind of implementation. especially for the economic field, which also day by day has decrease and poverty began to being one of our main concerns in the country. So i think its okay for the government to apply such thing to avoid people to be getting the viruses, but they also have to think about the solutions of the side effects that going to happen for applying this kind of implementation. **thank you**, xoxo <3” (PSW 9/P 3).

The woman participant above agrees with the implementation of COVID-19 in Indonesia. She argues that the government must consider the public economy condition because there has been so much poverty since the COVID-19 has appeared. She adds that there must be a solution for other problems triggered by the PPKM. From the written statement above, the researcher finds the polite language feature at the end of the paragraph. The participant expresses her gratitude as a form of politeness to close her response. The researcher claims that the participant does not ask anyone for help. However, she is grateful because she can express her opinions and aspirations.

#### 4.1.1.2.4 Formal Language

When meeting new people or older people, men and women will reflex to speak formally. Formal language is commonly used by both men and women from educated circles. Rather than men, women more often use an organized language arrangement and are more polite to the interlocutors. The hallmark of the formal language feature is the use of language that is grammatically appropriate and also neatly arranged. There are several examples of formal language that are found by the researcher in female students' writing as follows:

#### Data 32:

"I felt that my motivation in studying was going down because ***I could not meet my friends as my support system and discuss about the subject.*** I also felt bored sometimes and tired because the assignment was more much than usual" (PSW 8/P 1).

In the written response above, the participant thinks that studying at home loses her motivation to study and loses her friends as the support system. Then, she adds that studying at home is more tiring because the assignments are more than usual. Formal language features are found in the italicized and bolded sentences. Instead of abbreviating 'could not' to be 'couldn't', the participant prefers to write it using the correct grammatical and clear verb forms, so the researcher assumes it can be categorized as a formal language feature.

**Data 33:**

“Because it has both positive and negative sides, The positive side is that it saves time because there is no need to travel to campus, which is usually approximately 30 minutes. So that it can be replaced with breakfast which is often delayed when studying offline, the negative impact of erratic signals can hinder the learning process. Besides that, ***the internet package assistance does not work because it is often available at the end of the semester, and sometimes the internet quota cannot be used, so it is wasted***” (PSW 14/P 1).

The woman participant above conveys that learning at home has positive and negative sides. She says that she can use her morning time to start the class with breakfast because she usually skips it when she goes to campus. Then, the negative side is the interference of internet connection. The formal language features are in italicized and bolded sentences. Instead of abbreviating 'does not' to 'doesn't', then 'cannot' to 'can't', the participant prefers to write it in correct grammatical and appropriate verb forms. The researcher assumes that it is a formal

language feature because it follows grammatical and complete verb forms usually found in formal articles.

**Data 34:**

“Mmm maybe that is the best way for now. Although *the learning activities will not be optimal, it is better than increasing the covid-19.* To solve this problem, the role of the teachers is very important. The teachers should make the learning process more interesting in order to have the active class” (PSW 5/P 3).

The woman participant above reveals that she agrees with the implementation of PPKM because she thinks that it can reduce the spread of COVID-19. However, she says that because of PPKM, the learning activities are not running optimally. The participant thinks that the teacher's presence in the classroom is crucial to fostering a positive atmosphere. The formal language features are in italicized and bolded sentences from the writing above. Instead of abbreviating 'will not' to 'won't', the participant prefers to write it correctly and apply the appropriate verb form.

#### **4.1.1.2.5 Words which are Frequently Used by Women**

Men and women have different characteristics in understanding people's emotions when talking. Men are often more open and frank about how they feel, but women are more concerned about others. When men are upset about something, they express their annoyance right away, whereas women use subtle satire. In this case, the 'words which are frequently used by women' feature is almost the same as Lakoff's 'avoiding strong swear words' feature (1975). It used to insinuate words more subtle and not harsh. In this study, the researcher

identifies an example of the ‘words which are frequently used by women’ feature as follows:

**Data 35:**

“Some of my distant relatives in my mother's hometown very stubborn and underestimated the existence of Covid when the beginning of the pandemic appeared. And as you expected, when one by one the peoples around them began to fall, they panicked. But still, event though there are some peoples that panicked and began to take vaccine, some still doesn't. And *i don't know how to react anymore to peoples with mind pattern like that..aigoo*” (PSW 6/P 2).

The woman participant above writes about her distant relatives who disparage the existence of COVID-19. However, they become panicked when the others are contaminated. After that, they compete to get the vaccine. At the end of her writing, the participant subtly insinuates how her distant relatives think. When women are annoyed by things/people, they prefer to insinuate subtly than mock them directly.

#### 4.1.1.2.6 Minimal Response

The minimal response is one feature that appears in the women's communication. Women use minimal response to show that they are interested in the topic and make the minimal response to let their interlocutors continue the speech. In this research, the researcher discovers that female students use the minimal response feature in their writing. Those are:

**Data 36:**

“**Hmmm** I do not have any comments about the people's thoughts. You know that you cannot change the people's perceptions, right? So, in case the covid-19 is hoax or not, we should be vaccinated first as one of the efforts of decreasing the spread of covid-19. Besides that, we must pray for the loss of covid-19” (PSW 5/P 2).

The woman participant above thinks she does not care about people's thoughts on COVID-19 because every person has their right. She requests others to be vaccinated to decrease the spread of COVID-19. In the participant's writing, the researcher identifies the minimal response in the word 'hmmm'. It proves that when women are interested in the topic, they will continue it. However, they use minimal response at the beginning or middle of the speech or writing.

**Data 37:**

“**Yeah** okay okay okay. The problem is that if it is not so, society will be reckless and trivial. Whereas, this Covid will continue to exist. And Indonesia has not yet reached the targeted herd immunity. So, it's okay for the common good” (PSW 3/P 3).

The woman participant above states that she agrees to implement the PPKM because Indonesia has not yet reached herd immunity, and the PPKM is also for the common good. At the beginning of her statement, the participant begins with 'yeah', which can be categorized as the minimal response. Then, she continues her statement because she is interested in the topic.

#### 4.1.1.2.7 Commands

Commands feature usually appears on the men's and women's speech.

Women usually use soft directive commands to order or ask for help. They pretend to use words like 'please' or 'let's', but regarding the changing of social condition, the women frequently use the directive commands beside the softer ones. From the researcher's analysis of female students' writing, she finds several examples of commands feature that appears on the female students' writing as below:

##### Data 38:

"I'm surprised by people who think that covid 19 is a hoax, maybe they are blinded by their own ideals, but the data in the field says covid 19 is true. And one more thing if you don't believe in covid and don't want to be vaccinated then ***just be quit***" (PSW 4/P 2).

The participant above argues that people who do not believe COVID-19 existence are mind-blinded. She also adds that there is much data about infected people, but the others still do not believe that. Then, she warns those people to be vaccinated even if they do not believe in COVID-19. The commands feature in the written response above is in the participant's order for those who do not believe COVID-19. The woman participant above makes her order with the directive commands, rather than using the soft directive usually used by women.

##### Data 39:

"In my opinion, PPKM is very important to reduce the spread of the virus. But it must really be done and no one violates it. The government should tighten the rules and organize PPKM at the right time. If the

percentage of covid decreases, **PPKM must be abolished**. Also, If PPKM is held continuously, it will be disserve to the community as well” (PSW 1/P 3).

The participant above realizes that the implementation of PPKM is important to decrease the COVID-19. She also requests the government to continue the PPKM because it is for the good of the community. From the writing above, the commands feature is in the sentence that is bolded and italicized. The participant sends the request to the government with the directive commands. She also used the modal verb ‘must’, which can be assumed to be a little force in her order. Besides using the soft directive commands which is usually used by women, the participant prefers to use the directive commands.

#### Data 40:

“As a human being we have to protect and helping each other. But however, we live in the world who's free of everybody's opinion and people could freely expressing themselves however they likes. So my opinion regarding this case, I think everyone has its own choice to believe or not about something that happens in the worlds. But still, if the public government has already declare some rules that **we have to do**. Then we, as the nations citizen have to follow the rules without any exception. So, for some people out there who doesn't really believe in the existence of covid19 and said that they won't follow the rules is actually really reckless decision for them to do. Because as human being we have to live side by side everyday and needs to socialize with each other, that is why to avoid anything bad happens between one parties with another **we have to respect and follow the public government decisions**” (PSW 9/P 2).

The participant above argues that even though every person has their right, they still have to respect each other. She also states that people should obey the government rules since it is for the common good to decrease the spread of

COVID-19. In the middle and the end of the paragraph above, she orders society to respect others and follow the government rules. The commands feature is in the bolded and italicized sentence. Rather than using the soft directive commands with the words ‘please’ or ‘let’s’, the participant above prefers to use the directive commands to offer her request.

#### 4.1.1.2.8 Tag Question

Women usually use tag questions when they lack confidence about their claimed statements. They usually declare it and convince others to answer or acknowledge using the tag question. In this research, the researcher finds one example of tag question feature that appears in the female students’ writing, as below:

#### Data 41:

“Hmmm I do not have any comments about the people's thoughts. You know that you cannot change the people's perceptions, **right?** So, in case the covid-19 is hoax or not, we should be vaccinated first as one of the efforts of decreasing the spread of covid-19. Besides that, we must pray for the loss of covid-19” (PSW 5/P 2).

In the written statement above, the participant states that she does not want to comment on what other people think because she feels that everyone has the freedom to think and express their opinion. Then, she also suggests that people should prevent the spread of COVID-19 in this country. The participant uses tag questions when she conveys her belief that no one can change other people’s thinking styles. She uses the tag question feature to help her get answers or acknowledgement from others about the information she believes.

The tag question above also covers the participant's lack of confidence in expressing her statement.

In conclusion, compared to the language features in the male students' writing, the language features in the female students' writing are more numerous, both in the amount of data and the features used. If the male students only use six features, the girls use eight features. The feature which is used the most by women students is intensifiers. The use of intensifiers on women is the same as on men. Then, the least features are tag questions, and words are frequently used by women. They use tag questions to help them cover up their disbelief in the statements they make. In comparison, the words are frequently used by women they usually use to express subtle satire on something they don't like.

#### **4.1.2 The Differences of Language Features in Male's and Female's Writing**

Considering the data and the results above, the researcher aims to explain the differences in language features used by male and female students in their writing. The first feature is hedges. This feature is found both in male and female writings. Then, its occurrences are quite a lot. Data 22 until Data 25, which are about hedges on females' writing, show that females use the hedges to express their politeness because of their uncertainty. Holmes supports that the hedges feature are used by women is to show the side of politeness in expressing their opinions that may not necessarily be true (Hasanah & Wahyudi, 2015, p. 210). Then, Data 1 to Data 4 show men are more confident of something they know when using the hedges. They use it to cover their doubts about something they

believe in (Hasanah & Wahyudi, 2015, p. 210). The researcher assumes that female students more often include the hedges in conveying their thoughts. Therefore, it is common for them to cover up their doubts using verb forms from hedges.

The second is intensifiers. This feature mostly appears in the students' writing. Intensifiers emphasize and evaluate something felt or known by the speaker (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). The researcher finds that female students use intensifiers more than male students from the analysis above. In Data 26 until Data 29, the females more often emphasize and assess something they feel. The females have emphasized both quality and quantity. Meanwhile, in Data 5 until Data 8, which are the male students' writing, the intensifiers feature of the males' are calmer and not too much emphasizing quality or quantity for what happens to them. It can be concluded that both of them are like to emphasize, but the females are more active.

The third feature is a polite language. In this research, both male and female students use polite language. The amounts of data that appear are also the same. The use of the polite language features in their writings is also different. In Data 9 to Data 10, the male students tend to use this feature to ask for something, while in Data 30 to Data 31, the female students use this feature to express their gratitude. Unlike Holmes (2013, p. 168), he argues that women are more polite than men. Therefore, this research shows that males and females are polite for communicating.

The fourth feature is the formal language. Both male and female students use this feature in their writing. It can be shown in Data 11 to Data 13 for males' writing and Data 32 to Data 34 for females' writing. The students use the feature to provide the formal act in communicating with the correct verb forms. It is supported by Holmes (2013, p. 303) claims that formal language is usually uttered with standard verb forms. Because there are no restrictions in using the language style, several students use non-formal language. Moreover, some students still write their responses using the formal language with the correct grammatical arrangement and verb forms that are not abbreviated.

The fifth feature is the commands. Its function is for making an order or asking for help. The researcher discovers that male and female students are different for sending the request. In Data 38 to Data 40, the researcher first assumes that female students will prefer soft directive commands more. Still, in reality, female students are more likely to use directive commands. Meanwhile, in Data 18 to Data 21, male students use soft directive commands more often in order. In conclusion, the stereotypes in language will change due to the development of the times and the individual.

The sixth feature is taboo words. This feature only appears in male students' writing. The researcher determines five data. For example, in Data 14 to Data 17, the taboo words feature serves as an expression usually triggered by men when they are upset about something. Men tend to be franker than women, as women may be softer when expressing their annoyance. To sum up, for this

research, most of the taboo words are an act of ridiculous to people/facts that they do not like. Meanwhile, female students are calmer and do not make scorn.

The seventh feature in this discussion is words that are frequently used by women. The researcher only finds one. Data 35 shows that women make subtle insinuations when they are upset about something. Based on the explanation above, men tend to use taboo words when upset, while women use subtle satire. To summarize, the other female students only express that they are upset but do not give subtle sarcasm.

The eighth feature is the minimal response. Men and women use this feature differently. In this study, the researcher discovers four data. In Data 36 to Data 37, females use the minimal response to show their interest in the topic. Meanwhile, men use the minimal response to state that they are not interested in the topic. But in this research, the researcher does not find it in male students. Thus, it means that they are interested in what they have discussed.

The last feature is the tag question. It does not appear in the male students' writings. This feature only appears once in females' writing. In Data 41, the tag question is to declare the claim and convince others to get an answer or acknowledgment of the truth. Because the men do not use it, it can be concluded that the male students are more confident about their statements rather than the females.

The researcher argues that male and female students are not completely different in communicating based on the results above. They have their style, politeness, and formality. The stereotype about females are more polite than males

is not entirely correct for this research. It is because sometimes males are more polite than females. They also almost use the same features, but the females are more active. To summarize, they are balanced for providing the features when arguing, asking for help, showing gratitude, making an order, etc.

## 4.2 Discussion

According to the study results, the researcher finds that female students use more features than males. The male and female students use more intensifiers and hedges to assess and doubt their statements. From Karlsson's (2007) ten language features, the researcher does not identify any 'strategy to control the conversation' feature. The 'strategy to control the conversation' feature is usually found in direct two-way communication between the speaker and the listener. In her study, Karlsson (2007) applied direct two-way communication so that men or women could interrupt the conversation. Meanwhile, the researcher uses indirect two-way communication to obtain written responses. Therefore, the participants cannot control the conversation because the researcher sets the prompts with a predetermined topic.

Compared with Karlsson's (2007) study, there are similarities and differences. The similarity is in the high occurrences of the intensifiers in the data. Karlsson (2007, p. 34) said that she couldn't describe the high percentage of intensifiers because of its limitation. The similarity occurs because Karlsson (2007) and this research apply an open questionnaire question to collect the data. The researcher can't control what participants said, but the researcher provides those questionnaires through the assignment prompts. Several differences also

emerge in this study. The first is about politeness. Karlsson's (2007) research showed that women used polite language and soft directive commands more than men. Spender (1980) refutes that women are expected to be more polite than men, but it can't be guaranteed (Karlsson, 2007, p. 34). It proves that the era always changes, and the human's habits too. Contrary to Karlsson's (2007) research, men use polite language, and soft directive commands more than women. The soft directive command is like using 'please' to ask for something. It means that women are not always more polite than men. The second is the occurrence of minimal response. Karlsson's (2007) study proved that the minimal response feature is not a specific language of women, and it occurs more in men. Meanwhile, in this research, women use more minimal responses than men. Karlsson (2007) states that men use minimal response to show that they are not interested in the topic. The last is the use of taboo words. Karlsson (2007) caught the occurrence of taboo words both on male and female participants, but in this research, the researcher only can find taboo words feature on males. Those differences between Karlsson's study (2007) and the present research occur because every people's way for speaking are different. Moreover, everyone also has their own way of expressing their statements and thoughts.

Besides that, there are previous related studies that have the closest differences. Hapsari (2014) analyzed the language features and the differences which are occurred in "The Yellow Wallpaper" and "A Rose for Emily" short stories using Lakoff's (1975) theory. She took the male and female authors as the subject. Hapsari (2014) found two men's language features that are used by

a male author. Those are interruptions and commands. Meanwhile, the female author uses three language features: lexical hedges or fillers, intensifiers, and empty adjectives. Compared with Hapsari's (2014), the present study uses a different theory and finds more features on male and female subjects. The male students in this study do not use the interruptions feature which function is for cutting the speech of the speaker. This research obviously does not use this feature because there is no direct two-way communication. The researcher also assumes that 'interruptions' feature almost has the same function with 'strategy to control the conversation' feature. Therefore, the female students in this study do not use the empty adjective feature which function is for giving an admiration. The females prefer to assess with the intensifiers.

Priyadi and Setiawan (2015) examined whether the language features' explanations are the same or different when used in fiction and the real world. They used the two main characters in "Winds of Evil" novel and applied theories from Lakoff (1975) and Mulac (2001). They claimed that the features' functions are used in fiction, and the real world is the same. Compared with Priyadi and Setiawan (2015), the researcher does not find 'rising intonation on declarative' and 'empty adjective' features on female students, which function is for seeking confirmation from the addressee giving an admiration. Meanwhile, the females prefer to use the tag questions and the intensifiers in this research. Then, the researcher also does not identify several features used by Priyadi and Setiawan's (2015) male subject because they use a different theory that contains different

features. Those are humor sentences, brief sentences, and judgmental adjectives. Moreover, the 'commands' feature in the Priyadi and Setiawan's (2015) function is similar to the present study.

Another research is conducted by Nafilaturif'ah, Fazlina, Prayogo, Mardhia, Safitri, and Fidyanti (2017). They identified the most used features in Katniss Everdeen, whether the men's language features or the women's language features. They use the theory of Lakoff (1975), Holmes (1992), Sandriani (2012), and Wright (2002). They found that Katniss often uses the men's language features. Compared with the previous study, the researcher finds similar features with the present study. Those are hedges, intensifiers, and tag questions. Moreover, several features do not appear in the present study. Those are empty adjectives, considering progressive forms, avoiding personal experiences and feelings, having less filler, and speaking less. In conclusion, it could happen because of the use of different theories.

Considering the study's second objective, the researcher finds that the male and female students are not different. It can be proven from the used features, which are almost the same. But on the other sides, the females are less confident in giving opinions than males. Then, the females asses more than males. For politeness, they serve it differently. When males prefer to use it to make an order, females use it to gratitude someone. To conclude, they also have different for showing annoyance, if the males prefer to utter the taboo words, while the females do the subtle satire.

The elaboration of this study provides new findings which supported Karlsson's (2007) research findings which see that several features usually known as women's language features also may be used by the men and the men's language features may appear in the women speech too. But, the researcher does not find all of the features that have been composed by Karlsson (2007). From the several previous related studies above, no one has used students' writing as a data source and Karlsson's findings (2007) as the supporting theory. However, this study also rejected the old rules about women are inferior when speaking. This study proves that women are also good in communicating because along the time they are well educated as same as the men. In conclusion, the researcher also develops and expands the new invention with new findings and the different use in the theory which contains the features that have never been found in previous related studies to contribute to the newest study.

UIN SUNAN AMPEL  
S U R A B A Y A

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In the last chapter of this research, the researcher provides two sub-chapters. Those are conclusions and suggestions.

#### 5.1 Conclusions

The researcher aims to examine language features in male and female students' writing. As for the study results, the researcher finds as many as 205 data of language features. There are 94 data on male students' writing and 111 data on female students. The occurrences of the language feature between males and females are also quite different. On the men, the researcher discovers six language features. Those are hedges, intensifiers, polite language, formal language, commands, and taboo words. On the other side, there are eight features in women's writing. Those are hedges, intensifiers, polite language, formal language, commands, minimal response, tag questions, and words that are frequently used by women. However, the researcher does not detect any strategy to control the conversation feature in the students' writing because this research applies indirect two-way communication.

The researcher wants to briefly explain the language features' occurrences on male and female students' writing one by one. In the male students' writing, the features that mostly appear are the intensifiers, as do women. But, the intensifiers percentage is higher on women than men. There are 31 data of intensifiers on men

and 37 data on women. It proves that both male and female students like to emphasize their beliefs.

Following the students' writing differences, the researcher finds that they have several different aspects, such as confidence, politeness, and an act when annoyed by something. The males are more confident than females. On the other side, the females are softer when they get annoyed. Rather than males who tend to use taboo words, females like to use subtle satire. Then, it can be shown in formal language for politeness, and the females use it more than males. In the commands, the males are softer than females. In conclusion, for politeness, they are balanced. Both of them have their version of politeness because they are well-educated people.

## 5.2 Suggestions

The research aims to reveal the language features in the students' writing. From the findings above, the researcher thinks that conducting a study about language features is essential because we can learn new knowledge about the communication phenomenon we may see daily. As for the study's result, the researcher discovers the language features apparent and its differences in the students' writing. Future research can also study the language features again with the new invention and expansion, such as researching with difference theory, data source, or maybe using another methodology related to the previous study. The researcher suggests that future research can analyze the language features theory from other

theorists and sources like oral responses. Furthermore, the researcher also suggests future research using Karlsson's (2007) findings with DCT or role-play instruments.



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