



# Conversational Strategies Used by Women Speakers in Same-Sex Communication: A Research on Noor Tagouri Podcast

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## Abstract

This article explores women's language style through a regular conversation in a natural setting conducted by women speakers. Considering the potential of Podcasts on Spotify as a means to gather the conversation discourse, the writers were fascinated by one of the Podcasts performed by an American journalist and activist named Noor Tagouri. She initiated and ran a program called *The Process* to disclose someone's struggle, unique costumes, and way of thinking behind his/her success. This Podcast was chosen in terms of personal and introspective topics developed by Tagouri and her guest, Lisa Ling, whose profession was also a journalist. Through personal and introspective ideas, the researchers identified women's linguistic features such as minimal responses, hedges, tag questions, questions, commands and directives, swearing and taboo language, and compliments to build a cooperative environment. This article employed descriptive qualitative methods following the procedures proposed by Creswell (2014): collecting the data, analyzing the data, and interpreting the data. From thirty-four minutes of conversation, the result indicated that the speakers frequently used the features of hedges (55%). Then, followed by Minimal response occurred (20%), questions (12%), compliment (8%), tag questions (5%), and commands, directives, swearing, and taboos (0%). It can be concluded that the use of hedges was more widely used to maintain the flow of conversations which in line with turn-taking, courtesy, and mitigating miscommunication between speakers.

**Keywords:** conversation interaction, same-sex communication, women's cooperative behavior, women's linguistic features

## Introduction

Women and men speakers are known to possess different communication styles. In a social interaction where a man and a woman converse in a certain topic discussion, they tend to share different behavior identified from their conversational strategies such as minimal responses, hedges, turn-taking patterns, interruptions, and so on in conversational interactions. These strategies have resulted in two categories: *men's competitive speech style* and *women's cooperative speech style*. Fishman (1978) indicated that even though women seemed to talk more actively than men, this was not related to the dominance factor. In fact, women were often unsuccessful than men in getting their ideas approved. When this happened, the men used various non-cooperative strategies to control the conversation, like no response, interruption, inadequate or delayed response, and silence. DeFrancisco (1991) deducted that men have the power to set the norms of everyday conversation and that women indirectly need to adjust to these norms. Language is reflected as power, where the speakers are people who connect with it. In a discourse, power corresponds with inequality. Thus, one is viewed as more powerful than the other (Zunaidah et al., 2020).

As a consequence, some researchers have explored the field of language and sex up to this day. Lakoff undertook preliminary work regarding language and sex in 1975 under the title *Language and Women's place* to mark the feminist movement in the 1970s and 1980s (Lakoff, 2004). According to Gee and Handford (2013), the feminists worried about women's discrimination towards men's dominancy in how they dominated the interaction through talk. In the following years, there were studies focused on same-sex communication, especially on women's interaction. Through conversational practices, the researchers examined women's communication in all-women groups just like what has been conducted by Coates (1996). Her work on investigating a group of close friends in informal meetings revealed some linguistic features that were considered highly cooperative.

Moreover, Coates (2013) revealed that women tended to choose personal and introspective topics. Though they discussed general ones like holidays or music lessons, these would still deal with personal matters. Their interaction style was surrounded by solidarity and support and is also renowned as a cooperative speech style (Schilling-Estes et al., 1998). Another prior study carried out by Nelson also focused on cooperative linguistic behavior in five successive groups of teachers who worked at a university in a writing center. The groups were dominated by female graduate assistance. One male assistant told him that he loved the supportive and collaborative environment that the female assistances created during the project work (Nelson, as cited in Coates, 2013). Following Leaper (2019), in collaborative communication, the speakers tended to keep themselves away from a self-emphasizing relationship with a group's dominancy.

The conversation which the women develop usually became a way for them to construct a good relationship. In this sense, their own communication

characteristics of the female language (Ambarwati, Nurkamto & Santosa, 2019). In order to learn women's language characteristics, researchers are required to observe linguistic features in same-sex interaction. Lakoff in 1957 underlined ten features: *hedging, tag questions, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, specialized vocabularies (precise color terms), intensifier, hypercorrect grammar, super polite form, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress* (Lakoff, 2004). Following Lakoff's theory, Coates made some upgrades regarding ways to analyze same-sex conversation. She coined seven aspects: *minimal responses, hedges, tag questions, questions, commands and directives, swearing and taboo language, and compliments* (Coates, 2013).

### ***Minimal Responses***

Women speakers than male speakers often use minimal response. Prior to research on minimal response research, Holmes indicated women's awareness of supporting their interlocutor by producing responses with discourse markers such as: 'yeah', 'right' or 'mhm' (Holmes, 1995). A woman, in fact, knows where to put minimal response without overlapping or interrupting the interlocutor's ideas. Instead, she showed her role as an active listener.

### ***Hedges***

The words such as *I think, I'm sure, I mean, you know, sort of, perhaps, and like* are known as hedges since they express the speaker's certainty or uncertainty about the proposition under discussion. They are also often employed to mitigate the force of utterances in general.

### ***Tag Question***

Tag question is a grammatical structure where an interrogative structure is applied. According to Holmes, tag questions can be divided into speaker-oriented and addressee-oriented (Holmes, 1984). Tags with speaker-oriented ask addressee confirmation to the speaker's proposition such as the example below:

"He is at school. Isn't he?"  
(a mother to a teacher worrying her son skipping the class)

Meanwhile, tags whose primary function is the addressee-oriented concern with the speaker's attitude to the addressee as in the example shown below:

"That was so weird, wasn't it?"  
(a friend to a friend)

Furthermore, Holmes stated that when the speaker's relationship is picked out, it shows that facilitators tend to use tags than non-facilitators. They are in charge of

ensuring that interaction goes smoothly, for example, interviewers on radio and television.

### **Question**

According to Coates (2013), a Question is regarded as part of the conversational ordering device Question + Answer since they are interconnected: questions demand a response from the addressee. In building interaction, women use questions to invite others to participate, introduce new topics, hedge, check the views of other participants, and instigate stories.

### **Commands and Directives**

A directive can be defined as a speech act in which the speaker expects someone to do something. In accordance with Zaghlool and Yahia (2020), women have their own way of softening the commands. Thus, women speakers employ the following words in order to mitigate their utterance, as follows:

- let's*, to position the speaker together with the addressee(s) in the proposed action
- gonna*, to suggest someone for future action
- can and could*, to suggest rather than demand action
- maybe*, to soften directive command.

See how these directive words purposed the addressee(s) to make them take action with or for the speaker. However, women speakers have more polite ways to deliver their intention.

### **Swearing and Taboo Language**

Women speakers are inclined to pay more attention to producing their speech to make sure that they utter appropriate and polite words. In this regard, swearing and taboo languages are used infrequently. Especially when same-sex communication occurs, they are rarely uttered. Jespersen (1922) stated that women intuitively feel embarrassed by rude and careless phrases. Instead, they prefer to mitigate their expressions directly or indirectly.

### **Compliments**

According to Holmes (1998), women receive and produce more compliments than men do. Krisdiyanta (2019) asserted that men rarely involved compliments because they are regarded as face-threatening. Instead, men are more comfortable employing mock, insult, and spar to strengthen a relationship, especially friendship. Giving and receiving compliments is somewhat usual for women, which may happen in an everyday situation. When it comes to a compliment, women have various ways to produce admiration towards something they see. Generally, women throw a compliment on someone's look, behavior, thing, etc. Macintyre

(2019) regarded that this action becomes a crucial step to show attention and care to our interlocutors. In certain situations, compliments are beneficial to build positive environments. Thus, women can use them as politeness strategies in same-sex communication.

Research on women's linguistics features has been conducted. One example came from a study conducted by Rahmawati et al. (2019). The study investigated women's language features in delivering public speeches in RECODE World's Technology Conference. This conference highlighted an interview of Hillary Clinton with a journalist named Kara Swisher. In order to analyze Hillary Clinton's language, the study referred to a framework designed by Lakoff (2004). The findings indicated that Hillary Clinton uttered six linguistic features. They were *lexical hedges, intensifier, super polite form, avoidance strong swear, empty adjective, and emphatic stress*.

Another example was taken from the study executed by (Badari et al., 2019). The purpose of their research was to analyze Michelle Obama's language in her interview with Oprah Winfrey. To collect the data, the study relied on Lakoff's framework to investigate women's linguistic features regarding Michelle Obama's speech frequency and function. In addition, the researchers also employed a framework designed by Coates (2013) to find out men's language produced by Michelle Obama. The result yielded that women's linguistic features were employed frequently rather than men's linguistic features.

Between the two studies, some similarities and distinctions can be noticed. Both of the studies were mainly focused on investigating spoken discourse produced by two prominent American figures, Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama, in a talk show discussion hosted by women interviewers Kara Swisher and Oprah Winfrey. Same-sex communication between women speakers took place and, therefore, yielded a positive relationship. Moreover, these two studies utilized Lakoff's framework to see how their subject of the study utters the language that suited women's linguistic features. On the other side, the second study proved that a woman also could employ men's language though this may happen occasionally. The study employed a framework proposed by Coates to see how Michelle Obama, a former US first lady uttered men's linguistic features.

Research on women's language also can be analyzed by how they produce a monologue speech. A study held by Indra, Marnita, and Ayumi (2019) focused on three British female beauty influencers' language features, commonly shared information related to makeup tutorials, cosmetic/skincare reviews, hauls, and DIY (*Do It Yourself*) videos on their YouTube platform. Using Lakoff's framework, the result showed that they tended to share similar behavior when uttering language. It was indicated that the use of intensifiers like *so, very, really, such, too*, and so on were primarily employed so that the speakers had the flexibility to show their audience towards products that they admired and disliked. Unlike the two previous studies, the third study was concerned with monologue speech. The speaker

owned the luxury to deliver her thoughts without getting someone interrupting or leading the topic discussion.

Furthermore, aside from the potency of spoken discourse, researchers also took the opportunity to investigate written discourse produced by women. Pebrianti (2013) examined three Indonesian bloggers who regularly posted information about daily lives, business, fashion, and special events. Like the other three previous studies, Lakoff's framework was still used to reveal typical language commonly employed by the three bloggers. From ninety-seventy postings, the findings concluded that their writings depended on *intensifiers* since these features helped them clarify, describe, and recommend a piece of information to the readers. A publication like a magazine also carries a potency to be analyzed. Researchers who put interest in women's language employed this source to see women's typical language style, especially regarding interview articles. Setyorini and Indarti (2008) looked into *O' The Oprah* magazine as a source to obtain the data. By taking into account the use of Coates's framework, it was concluded that the participants mostly included minimal responses, hedges, questions, commands, and directives to converse with the magazine interviewer.

Several examples above utilized different sources ranging from talk shows, monologue speeches, blog articles, and magazine interviews. What the present study proposed was the use of digital audio stored on the internet called Podcasts. In general, Podcasts offer some options where the listeners can freely choose what to hear. There are plenty of categories related to education, comedy, mystery, society, culture, lifestyle, business, technology, politics, etc. Typically, on Podcasts, there are a group of people or one person who leads the show. Thus, same-sex interaction or mixed-sex interaction may occur. Previous literature focusing on this area has used many digital sources, but a lack of studies considered Podcasts a platform to obtain the data. In addition, prior studies on women's language inclined to employ Lakoff's framework, whereas Coates's framework is still rarely found. Therefore, the present study wished to explore how women produce the language as a conversational strategy in constructing a cooperative environment among them by employing Coates's ways.

Corresponding with the object of the study, the present study considered the talk between two journalist figures, Noor Tagouri and Lisa Ling, to be analyzed. Through audio broadcasting, which was popularly known as Podcast, Noor Tagouri ran an interview series with well-known people under the Podcast name called '*The Process*'. Furthermore, this study centralized one episode where she invited Lisa Ling as her guest. Noor Tagouri and Lisa Ling are both American women Journalists who have been featured in several documentary series due to their influential and inspiring works. Moreover, their works also have been published in many reputed digital media in the US. In this one episode, they discussed personally how being a journalist has become a way to help marginalized people or cultures so that other audiences can hear their voice and perspective. Moreover, Lisa Ling expressed her feeling that she could better understand her role as a

human by immersing herself holistically to many conversations with people. The communication style developed in Noor Tagouri and Lisa Ling's discussion is indeed in line with Coates (2013), who stated that women typically alter the circumstance into a more friendly and supportive one when faced in same-sex conversation.

After the explanation above, the present study was aimed to observe the presence and the absence of linguistic features as a conversational strategy proposed by Coates, such as minimal responses, hedges, tag questions, questions, commands and directives, swearing and taboo language, and compliments in a same-sex conversation conducted by Noor Tagouri and Lisa Ling as well as analyzing their function in the conversation. Therefore, the study took into account the use of Podcasts as a resource to answer the following research question: to what extent do linguistic features as conversational strategies are applied in women's communication to support a cooperative environment?

## **Method**

This section presented the steps on what instruments should be prepared and how to obtain the data. In this study, the method used was descriptive qualitative, and thus, the actions taken, as follows: collecting the data, analyzing the data, and interpreting the data (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, Creswell mentioned that qualitative research helped the researchers answer what, why, and how questions rather than how many.

In addition, the participants of this study were Noor Tagouri and Lisa Ling. Noor Tagouri was an award-winning journalist as well as an activist who worked on the issues of subcultures and marginalized communities in the U.S. Meanwhile, Lisa Ling was also an award-winning journalist, an author, and currently, a show host of documentary television called '*This Is Life with Lisa Ling*' aired on CNN. In the Podcasts channel named '*The Process*', Noor Tagouri hosted interview sessions with some influential figures in the US discussing their experiences passing through ups and downs as a process of their struggle. In one episode of 'The Process', Lisa Ling was invited by Noor Tagouri to share her process of building trust with other people as part of her responsibilities as a Journalist.

Regarding the measures and data analysis. The writers started by listening to the whole discussion of Noor Tagouri and Lisa Ling on Spotify while understanding their style of interaction in same-sex communication. After that, the writers continued transcribing the transcript of the conversation, which lasts for thirty-four minutes. Later on, the analysis was conducted by focusing on women's language features uttered by both Noor Tagouri and Lisa Ling and figuring out in what situation the features are used. Besides, another thing to do was calculating the frequency of how many times the language features are being uttered. After all of these steps were fulfilled, the researchers carried on the process of interpreting

the data.

### Results

This section mainly concerns reporting the outcomes of audio transcription regarding the conversation on the Podcast channel 'The Process' in the episode 'Building Trust with Others'. The data is presented in the form of a table informing women's linguistic features, which Noor Tagouri and Lisa Ling produced during the interaction. Moreover, several excerpts are shown as well as interpreted in order to make the data more understandable.

The table below shows women's linguistic features, which Tagouri and Ling produced in their conversation such as *minimal response, hedges, tag questions, questions, command and directives, swearing and taboos, and compliments* were analyzed in detail.

Table 1. The Use of Women's Linguistic Features in Same-Sex Conversation

No	Women's Linguistic Features		Noor Tagouri	Lisa Ling	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Minimal Response	Right	2	2	4	10%
		Yeah	19	7	26	65%
		Yes	2	-	2	5%
		Exactly	2	2	4	10%
		Others	4	-	4	10%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>29</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20%</b>
2.	Hedges	You Know	4	22	26	24%
		Like	32	5	37	34%
		I mean	2	22	24	22%
		Others	7	15	22	20%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>55%</b>
3	Tag Questions	Formal Tags	-	-	0	0
		Informal Tags	2	8	10	5%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5%</b>
4	Questions		19	4	23	12%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12%</b>
		Let's	-	-	-	0
5	Command & Directives	Gonna	-	-	-	0
		Can & Could	-	-	0	0
		Maybe	-	-	0	0



	<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
6	Swearing and Taboos		-	-	0	0
	<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
7	Compliments		7	9	16	8%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8%</b>
	<b>Total</b>		<b>102</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>100%</b>

After analyzing the language used by Tagouri and Ling in one of the episodes of 'The Process', the writers have discovered 198 women's linguistic features proposed by Coates (2013). As seen from the table, those features have been grouped into seven categories. Minimal response occurred 40 times (20%), hedges 109 times (55%), tag questions 10 times (5%), questions 23 times (12%), commands, directives, swearing and taboos 0 times (0%), and compliments 16 times (8%). It is found that the most dominant feature used was hedges 109 times (55%). Furthermore, according to the data transcript, there were some situations when the linguistic features were used frequently, as follows:

### Minimal Response

#### Context 1:

In this conversation, Tagouri asked Ling about her process of protecting the interviewee's privacy since she has interviewed sex workers, gang members, and prisoners. Ling mentioned that she and her team felt an urge to report the story responsibly

#### Excerpt 1:

Lisa Ling : It's a great question. the people who share their stories with me, in some cases, they have shared things that they have never even shared with their closest friends or family members.

Noor Tagouri : *Yeah*

Lisa Ling : and in doing so, we have shared a moment that is so intimate and so personal that I feel this intense obligation to make sure that I tell the story correctly and responsibly. Also, allow you to be sure that you're comfortable telling the story, right?

Noor Tagouri : *Yeah*

Lisa Ling : I mean I can never guarantee that someone is going to be happy with what I report but I will have communicated to you the consequences of saying certain things or I will make sure you feel as comfortable as you could possibly feel sharing

this story. I can't guarantee that you're going to like what we report, but I can guarantee that I will never intentionally malign you,

Noor Tagouri : *Yeah*

Lisa Ling : or try to put you in a position where you regret telling your story.

The response used by Tagouri indicated discourse marker '*yeah*'. As seen in Table 1, it was used 26 times (65%). Then, it was followed by markers '*right*', '*exactly*', other types of minimal response (10%), and marker '*yes*' (5%). By showing a minimal response, Tagouri aspired to show her support to her interlocutor and played her role as an active listener. Moreover, Tagouri's response did not interfere with Ling's ideas. From the dialogue above, it can be noted that both Tagouri and Ling discussed more personal topics in the field of journalism. Ling shared how her career as a journalist has brought her to be more sensitive to other people's feelings and remind herself that this occupation was not primarily about ratings but to enlighten humanity's sense of humanity.

### Hedges

#### Context 2:

As an experienced journalist who has been working in the journalism field, Ling has become an inspiration to Tagouri in making the decisions. Tagouri, who is also a journalist, expressed how Ling has influenced young journalists to consider every decision carefully.

#### Excerpt 2:

Noor Tagouri : That is very true and *like* you have become such an incredible mentor to me. *It's like* I always *felt like*, *I mean* you're always an example to me, but you became an incredible mentor because I always *felt like* I am able to come to you with *like*... this is what I'm doing or this is *like* something I put out and now being *like* having other people reach out to me about those things, *like* you're always a reflection I go back to you because *I'm like*, well if Lisa didn't do that, for me then, I wouldn't have this type of guidance or this type of knowledge and so, that's really important. So, *It is like* I am trying to pay it forward.

This utterance showed expressions which can be categorized as hedges. For instance: *like* and *I mean*. Regarding the data presented in table 1, *like* has been mentioned 37 times (34%). Then, it is followed by discourse marker *you know* (24%), *I mean* (22%), and other types of hedges (20%). Tagouri's usage of these

hedges was to emphasize that she was certain with her opinion on Ling. Instead of showing a signal of uncertainty, this dialogue led to an honest impression of someone who admired a certain figure.

### **Tag Questions**

#### *Context 3:*

This part presented an example of the use of tag questions in a conversation. Tagouri and Ling uttered the role of social media in facilitating people to access various information. Ling agreed that it brought advantages. However, it also can be a boomerang to people who do not reformulate the truth of information.

#### *Excerpt 3:*

Lisa Ling : Well, yeah. There is no fact-checking on streaming and on social media. I mean, you're just spewing, or you're retweeting or you're commenting, *right?* or you're just cranking out stories without taking that time to fact check things.

Based on Table 1, both speakers did not produce formal tags. This conversation was not a formal event. Thus, the way Tagouri and Ling converse followed an informal circumstance. It is found that the discourse marker '*right*' was uttered 10 times (5%). According to the example above, both Tagouri and Ling acknowledged the disadvantages of social media, and they did not require approval since they have the same opinion.

### **Questions**

#### *Context 4:*

This dialogue underlined Tagouri and Ling's discussion on humans' nature as social beings. They expressed that many people were connected on social media, but they did not quite connect and understand their followers in real life. As a presenter in this Podcast, Tagouri invited Ling to be involved in this topic by asking her how she deals with emptiness.

#### *Excerpt 4:*

Noor Tagouri : *how do you get over the emptiness?*

Lisa Ling : I mean, I think when I engage people, it's almost they're appreciative of being engaged.

In this excerpt, Tagouri stated a type of 5W+1H question. Table 1 indicated that 23 questions were mentioned (12%). Besides, this question was created as a hook to develop the conversation flow between the two speakers. Having a list of questions in a Podcast interview was also crucial to understanding the interviewee's perspectives.

### Commands and Directives

As seen in Table 1, both speakers did not use expressions of commands and directives. According to Oktapiani, Natsir, and Setyowati (2017), commands and directives are functioned to make somebody do something, which means the speakers need to respond with action. Coates (2013) argued there is a difference between men and women speakers producing commands and directives. Men tend to use explicit commands, for instance: *gimme or get off*. In contrast, women produce implicit commands, such as: *let's gonna, can, could, and maybe* as shown in the table above. Both Tagouri and Ling did not produce commands and directives in the conversation. Thus the result showed 0%.

### Swearing and Taboo Language

The conversation developed by Tagouri and Ling has indicated that they managed to produce utterance wisely. The topic raised on Tagouri's podcast concerned how a journalist or reporter built trust with other people. Both Tagouri and Ling were inclined to produce supportive utterances rather than words that promoted swearing and Taboos. This can be seen from the table above, which showed no swearing and taboos.

### Compliments

#### Context 5:

In the episode of 'The Process,' the speakers threw several compliments to each other. The most frequent compliment was regarding how both figures have contributed to journalism and positively impacted society. The excerpt below revealed their compliments action, as follows:

#### Excerpt 5:

- Noor Tagouri : I always learn from you, and I appreciate that.  
 Lisa Ling : Likewise  
 Noor Tagouri : You learn from me?  
 Lisa Ling : I do. I mean, *I love just seeing you out there in the world. You know, just being this beautiful intelligent vocal opinionated woman who is just kind of doing you out there. You know, because I think, again, we all have these sorts of internal predispose. We think certain ways about people*

As stated in Table 1, compliments have been stated 16 times (8%). In accordance with Holmes (1998), compliments in women's conversation have become common. Unlike in men's conversations, women tend to show more support by giving and taking compliments.

## Discussion

The result of this study presented information regarding women's linguistic features in an all-women group conversation. By investigating the utterances uttered by Tagouri and Ling in a podcast called *'The Process'*, there were five out of seven linguistic features. The features of minimal response, hedges, tag questions, questions, and compliments were present during the conversation. However, commands and directive features, as well as swearing and taboos, were absent. During the conversation, hedges were found to be the most employed by the speakers, with a total of 55%. The expression of *'like'* was highly used with 34% and mostly done by Tagouri. Hedges are defined as relieving words since they can be utilized to vanish the effect of an expression. They can present adjectives, adverbs, or clauses (Rosanti and Jaelani, 2009). According to Namaziandost and Shafiee (2018), hedges such as: *'like'*, *'you know'*, *'I mean'*, and other types of hedges are employed to establish conversational guidelines in line with turn-taking, respect, and moderate face-dangers. Hedging also can be understood as a communication technique since it helps to mitigate miscommunication. In the excerpt above, Tagouri's use of hedges was known to express the sense of sureness in her ideas. She also tried to use *'like'* to avoid boastful expression since she told Ling that she was an incredible mentor. The example presented in the findings showed that Tagouri used several *'like'* words as she intended to describe how Ling has successfully inspired Tagouri's journey in journalism. It can be seen by how she mentioned Ling's experience as her guidance to take the decision. Lakoff in 1975 claimed that women's language is often linked with their behavior of unassertiveness. That was why women used more hedges than men (Lakoff, 2004). Her claim toward women and hedges was linked with society's perspective that women cannot affirm themselves strongly because it was not appropriate and ladylike. However, Coates responded that Lakoff's perspective underlined no empirical evidence. Therefore, she discussed that hedges are utilized to convey the speaker's uncertainty in some cases, but in other cases, they can also be used to express certainty (Coates, 2013). As the example shown, Tagouri, the speaker who produced frequent words such as *'like'* did not try to express her ideas, which she was unsure about. Instead, she employed the word how certain she was about her ideas.

Hereafter, the minimal response was seen to come second with a percentage of 20%. As can be withdrawn, a minimal response such as: *'right'*, *'yeah'*, *'yes'*, *'exactly'* and other words often linked with politeness. Yule (1996) defined politeness as a strategy that carries a force to mitigate a chance of conflict between speakers. Makejeva (2017) explained that it exists in every culture and is adapted in various situations. Addressing the excerpt of minimal response, Tagouri was found employing the discourse maker *'yeah'* multiple times because she placed a sense of sympathy and active listenership when listening to Ling's story. Giving minimal response in conversation is not categorized as an interruption. Instead,

Tagouri still welcomed Ling to hold the floor. Ling, as Tagouri's addressee, may feel that she is heard. Engagement in communicative language activities needs to be constructed by the interlocutors in which they take to turn their roles as producers and receivers (Jumaa et al., 2019). Thus, this connection can establish a positive relationship between speakers. This notion is also supported by Bennett and Jarvis (2010) that it works to signal informality, politeness, liking, and agreement.

Occasionally, a minimal response can be present in visual forms, for instance: gaze, nods, smiles, grimaces, furrowed brows, and so on (Norrick, 2012). However, in the present study, the writers' concern was on the discourse makers. Then, in the third place, it shows that the utilization of questions appeared with 12%. Mostly, Ling received the questions from Tagouri since she was an agent who led the interview. As noted in the findings, Tagouri threw 19 questions, where Ling only asked four questions. Like any other presenters, Tagouri held control for what Ling could respond to since the answer needs to be related and relevant (Jakobsson, 2010). Freed (1994) mentioned the function of questions used as a hook to receive information related to the addressee's life, emotional shared memories, experiences, and the conversation itself. The excerpt provided in the finding section has told us that Tagouri wanted to know Ling's experiences related to her way to tackle the feeling of emptiness. The way Ling responded to Tagouri's question was also involved prior events which she experienced. Moreover, Freed (1994) categorized this type of question as an elaboration question where Tagouri called Ling to exchange information related to the topic. This required an elaboration so that Tagouri could elicit open-ended discussion with her guest.

Meanwhile, compliments indicated 8% in the utterance that both of the speakers produced. In society, compliments are regarded as a common routine and happen in daily interaction. Compliments are the fundamental property that allows the speakers to express their admiration and appreciation of something seen as good and beautiful (Sartini, 2019). Compliments can serve a variety of purposes that they are not only expressed on someone's beauty. They can generally include appearance, action, character, and personality (Keshavarz, Ceteresi, and Asit, 2020). As mentioned in the excerpt, Tagouri and Ling directed their compliments to reflect the actions which have been done. They have known each other because they worked in the same field. Thus, both speakers understood the challenge and struggle in their journalistic career, and so, they valued each other by remarking an appreciation. The compliments that Tagouri and Ling uttered were not merely functioned as a communication strategy. Nevertheless, they were regarded as important to establish a friendship connection. Krisdiyanta (2019) remarked that compliments help establish a relationship between friends. Especially for the speakers who separated for a period of time to see each other.

Further, in terms of tag questions, it was found that the speakers produced 5% of informal tag questions. During the interaction, tag questions happened occasionally, and they were produced after one speaker stated her opinion on a certain topic. The excerpt reflected the use of discourse '*right*' to sign that Ling

tried not to force her opinion on her interlocutor. It means that Tagouri was allowed to agree or disagree. Zaghlool and Yahia (2020) claimed that women speakers employ tag questions to clarify the clarity they uttered in their opinion. The tag questions usually do not intend to make anyone agree with one's opinion.

## **Conclusion**

This study set out to explore the use of women's linguistic features produced in same-sex communication. The spoken discourse was obtained from an informal talk between two women speakers held on a Podcast station called '*The Process*.' This investigation has shown that the study participants employed the use of hedges more frequently than other linguistic features. Hedges played an essential role in asserting the speakers' ideas without decreasing their respect to an interlocutor. Thus, to avoid miscommunication and face-dangers, the participants were concealed with several discourse markers involving hedges features. The hedges, from now on, also have been produced to prevent the speakers from saying exaggerated or arrogant expressions. The use of hedges has been crucial to keeping the interaction on track without diminishing politeness rules.

This study is limited in several ways, and the writers recommend important suggestions for further work. First, the focus was restricted to women interaction where the setting took place in an informal situation. Future research that explores women's interaction and women's language style can take into account the role of informal setting and formal setting in influencing women's linguistic features. Future studies may also measure the potency of different settings by comparing informal and formal situations. Second, this study presented a small number of participants with only two speakers involved in an interaction. Researching this area with a larger sample is recommended. Future research can investigate how a group of women converse by paying attention to the development of topic choices, topic development, and the exchange of turn-taking. There are prior studies on women's language style that employ the framework developed by Lakoff. The researchers recommend more in-depth research on employing a framework designed by Coates in analyzing women's linguistic features.

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