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# WOMEN AND MEN'S LANGUAGE IN NIKI'S LYRICS

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**Abstract:**
*This study discusses the influence of gender on word choice in NIKI's songs, analyzing how differences in female and male language are manifested in song lyrics. Word choice in the lyrics indicates differences in NIKI's language use. These differences can be distinguished through linguistic features. The purpose of this study is to identify linguistic characteristics in word choice that characterize female and male language in NIKI's selected songs, and to explore the differences in the use of female and male language characteristics based on context and social norms. The researcher uses Janet Holmes' theory (2013) as the primary theory and Coates (2004) for gender perspectives. The research methodology is a qualitative research approach. Data collection was conducted using documentation techniques. Data analysis was conducted using a descriptive technique. The data for this study are lyrics from NIKI's selected songs: "Oceans & Engines" (2022), "Lose" (2020), "La La Lost You" (2019), "Backburner" (2022), and "Autumn" (2024). The results of the study indicate linguistic characteristics that characterize the language. First, NIKI's word choice demonstrates many indirect expressions, as well as the use of hedging and reinforcement to emphasize and describe emotional images, which are characteristic of women's language. On the other hand, there is also the use of male language that tends to use direct statements with a competitive approach. Second, these language use are influenced by social norms, women's language tends to be more cooperative, while men's language shows direct statements and a competitive approach as a way to show dissatisfaction.*
***Keywords**: gender, word choice, Niki, descriptive study, sociolinguistics*

## A. INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics, an interdisciplinary field that combines elements of sociology and linguistics to explore how language operates in different social contexts. Sociolinguistics investigates the complex relationship between language and society, analyzing how linguistic variation arises due to social factors such as class, ethnicity, region, and gender. This discipline is often referred to as the study of "Language Society" because it highlights the dynamic interaction between linguistic choices and societal influences (Malabar, 2015). Sociological variables, including factors such as gender or class, must be clearly demonstrated to be relevant to the individuals involved in a particular study before any claims or conclusions regarding their influence can be made (Sunderland, 2006). This foundational knowledge sparked the researchers' interest in exploring this topic further, leading them to select it as the focus of their analysis. The main reason behind this decision was to understand how gender, as a sociological variable, can influence language construction.

According to Kristy (2022), there are notable differences in the way language used between men and women, as each gender tends to adopt distinct speech styles that align with societal expectations. Specifically, women are often expected or inclined to use more feminine speech style, which may include features such as politeness, emotional expressiveness, and a focus on building rapport. On the other hand, men are generally perceived to use a more masculine speech style, which might involve directness, assertiveness, and a focus on conveying information (Holmes, 2013). This observable phenomenon in language use between gender serves as the primary reason why the researcher has chosen to analyze this issue. The researcher chose to analyze the issue through songs because songs are one of the simplest and the most easily understood examples of everyday language, effectively capturing how language is constructed and used in a societal context. Songs often reflect the nuances of communication, making them an ideal medium for studying linguistic patterns and social influences.

For this study, the researcher chose Nicole Zefanya, professionally known as NIKI as the primary subjects of analysis. The decision to focus on this artist stems from the songs that this artist has produced, which tends to express emotional word choices. This artist has produces several songs that can be seen from both women's perspectives and men's perspectives. To ensure that this study is focused and meaningful, the researcher set several criteria for selecting the songs to be analyzed. First, the researcher screened songs based on the artist themes, specifically selecting songs that revolved around heartbreak. The researcher believe that this theme offers a rich opportunity to explore how social identities, such as gender, can influence how language is constructed and expressed in emotional contexts. Furthermore, the researcher selected songs that were not only performed by NIKI, but also written and composed by her. This ensured that the lyrics reflected the artists' personal perspectives and creative choices, rather than being influenced by external songwriters. By focusing on songs where the artists were both performers and lyricists, the researcher aimed to gain deeper insight into how individual identities shape the use of language. Specific songs selected for analysis from NIKI's discography include "*Oceans and Engines*", "*Lose*", "*La La Lost You*", *"Backburner", "Autumn".* These songs were chosen because they resonated with the theme of heartbreak and were representative of NIKI's lyrical and musical style.

The researchers hope to reveal how gender in music, providing a deeper understanding of the interaction between individual expression and language used. The

researcher finds researches that similarly analyzing in gender and language approach. The difference between this research and those mentioned above is that this research focused on word choice and social context tendencies that influence word choice for the research object. This study used a descriptive analysis between both artists. This study only focused on word choice in lyrics and the analysis focused on the characteristics of gender language. What this research has in common with others is that they both use a gender approach in the linguistic sphere. In this study, the researcher focused on word choices of the use of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and the communication styles.

The objectives of this research are: (1) To found out the linguistic features in the word choices that characterized women's language and men's language in NIKI's selected songs, (2) To explore the use of women's language and men's language in NIKI's selected songs in the context in social norms. This research paper aims to explore the significance of gender and language. Through the analysis of lexical preferences in the music of NIKI, one can uncover meaningful insights into how language reflects and upholds societal gender norms and stereotypes.

## B. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Sociolinguistics

The research is fundamentally grounded in the field of Sociolinguistics, specifically examining the intricate relationship between language and gender. Sociolinguistics constitutes a confluence of two terminologies that elucidate its fundamental nature, namely sociology and linguistics. The two uphold an exceedingly intimate connection in their interpretations. Consequently, the correlation between the way individuals partake in social existence and how language is employed therein is what the researcher denotes as Sociolinguistics (Malabar, 2015). According to Ayu & Hadiwijaya (2024), Sociolinguistics concentrates not solely on the framework of language, but also on the way language is employed within a societal and cultural framework by comprehending social linguistic variation. This social linguistic variation is, of course, impacted by an array of social determinants such as social class, ethnicity, communicative context, and gender. With the existence of these determinants, linguistic variation can be engendered.

### 2. Gender and Language

Tannen (1990), points out how women and men tend to use different communication style due to their social experiences and expectations. Tannen argues there are different linguistics cultures and conversational styles. Men are more focused on establishing and maintaining their power and individual identities, more likely to state their ideas explicitly and avoid appearing weak. On the other hand, women generally more focused on building and maintaining connections, likely to use hints or subtle clues to express their points and build rapport with others. These two indicate that language is a tool for expressing gender identity through the specific patterns that reinforce of power and connection in people. This has proven how language used to construct identity in dynamic ways that influenced by social context of the interaction, the participants, and their relationship.

### 1. Features of Women's Language

Holmes (2013), mentioned in her book the theoretical perspective that can be used to analyze the differences between gender in language. Holmes also cited about women's language from Lakoff (1975) that the characteristics of women's language, such as:

a. use of lexical hedges or fillers

b. super polite form and indirect speech
c. empty adjective or expressive adjective
d. use of intensifiers
e. tag questions
f. precise color terms

**2. Features of Men's Language**

According to Coates (2004), women's language and men's language can be differed by the language style that used. It can be seen by the characteristics of men's language, such as:
a. swearing and taboo language (men's language tends to use swear and taboo words more)
b. dominance conversational strategies (men's language tends to use directives and explicit commands)
c. straightforward language and less-polite words (more straightforward language that goes straight to the point without worrying about polite words)
d. powerful language (men's language tends to use powerful language even though they are in lower social status)

**3. Social Construction of Gender**

According to Meyerhoff (2006), the common rationale for distinguishing between sex and gender is that sex is a biological category, while gender is a social and cultural category. In other words, sex is something a person has and can be defined by an objective, scientific criterion, namely the number of X chromosomes a person has. Gender, on the other hand, is a social property, something acquired or constructed through relationships with others and adherence to certain cultural norms and constraints. Gender could be represented in social practice as ways of dressing, ways of defining what is desirable, and a network of associations.

Based on Zahra (2018), gender is a complex social construct that shapes individual identities, roles, and behaviors based on societal expectations typically associated with being male or female. This multifaceted concept goes beyond biological sex, encompassing cultural norms, personal experiences, and historical contexts. The intricate relationship between gender and language reflects and reinforces social structures, power dynamics, and cultural values. Understanding this relationship is essential for comprehending the nuances of human communication and the ways in which societal expectations can shape linguistic practices across different contexts and communities.

Janet Holmes (2013), stated that looking at the social context of language use by gender actors, it can be seen from social norms. Social norms influence the use of gender-based language with different interaction patterns. Women tend to use more cooperative language as a conversation strategy and provide many positive expressions. Men more often use competitive language when interacting. Women's and men's communication styles differ in their purpose. Women tend to aim to maintain relationships and avoid direct disagreements. Men more often aim to put forward contradictory arguments to dominate the conversation.

**4. Song and Lyric**

Based on Suharto (2004), song is musical composition that includes melody and lyrics. Songs are created as an act of expressing feelings, stories, and massages. Songs serve as an aspect of human expression and can differ terms of styles, duration, and complexity significantly as a fundamental aspect. Songs that are remarkable usually have specific characteristics, such as an appealing melody, harmony, the integrations of theme, music, and

lyrics. Lyric is a term that refers to the words of song as an artistic expression. Lyrics can intricate emotions, thoughts, and narratives which can allow the songwriter to express their experiences and feelings. Lyrics could also be the reflection of cultural values, societal issues, and historical context. The personal nature of lyrics allows the listeners to create a connection with a sense of belonging and understanding. It happens because lyrics is possessed by poetic quality, with literary devices like metaphor, imagery, and rhymes as a means of communication, conveying messages or ideas, thoughts, and also challenge the social norms.

## 5. Review on Related Research

The first research is the work of Sri Yuliani, Arimuliani Ahmad, and Ikel Srinoviati titled Sociolinguistics Perspective on Gender Patterns in Instagram, Vol. 14, Number 1, DOI: 10.11591/edulearn.v (2020), affiliated with Universitas Islam Riau, Indonesia. The purposes of this research are to explore the gender patterns found in Instagram from a sociolinguistics perspective and to identify the types of gender patterns based on language in Instagram usage among college students in Pekanbaru. This research uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) to analyze the data and grounded the study in sociolinguistics, examines language and society on how gender influences language use. This research uses descriptive research methodology involving qualitative analysis. The findings are the two main types of gender patterns which in writing and profile photos and five key assumptions in language influences differentiation.

The second research is Djalilova Zarnigor Obidovna (2022), Gender Differenciation of Masculine and Feminine Verbalization, Volume 2, Number 5, DOI: 10.55640/eijmrms-02-05-14. The purpose of this research finds the differences between male and female verbal behavior, it changes, and the comparative analysis of gender units. The researcher of this research used gender linguistics theory that studies the expression of gender in language and its concept. The research uses a comparative analysis and finds significant differences and the research indicates further study. The findings of the research, such as differences between men's and women's speaking styles with the influence of gender and cultural factors, men use straightforward language and active sentences while women use emotional, evaluative language and polite expressions.

The next research that the researcher found as previous research is Variety of Languages on Instagram Captions: Gender Analysis, Volume 7, Number 2, DOI:10.24235/ileal.v7i2.9592 (2022), by Adinda Oktaseska Agata and Aceng Ruhendi Saifullah. The purposes of the research are to describe the influence of gender in languages used in Instagram captions and to analyze how gender affects language features in context of social media. The study refers to Lakoff's theory of female language characteristics and Mulac's theory of male characteristics. It employs a Computer Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA) approach. The research uses qualitative descriptive methods. The findings from this research are the similarities of language features by male and female in Instagram captions, how gender influenced language used, and sociolinguistics in the context of phenomena in social media.

The fourth research used as the previous research is by Zulhumor Radjabovna Juraeva titled Gender Stereotypes in the Mirror of the Categories of Masculinity and Femininity in Various Linguocultures, Volume 2, Number 3 (2022). The purposes of this research are to highlight the issue of reflecting the category of gender and to focus on gender stereotypes as socially constructed categories of masculinity and femininity. This research is

grounded in gender linguistics and discussed the dynamic nature of masculinity and femininity to social modeling and transformation. It analyzes the relationship between gender and language by article reviews in existing literature. The results, linguistic expressions illustrate that gender perceptions are often influenced by hierarchical and patriarchal patterns. The concept of masculinity is often associated with intelligence, aggressiveness, strength, dominance, and independence and femininity is associated with emotionality, sensitivity, obedience, and openness. Linguistic expressions illustrate that gender perceptions are often influenced by hierarchical and patriarchal patterns.

The last research is Gender Bias and Stereotypes in Large Language Models with DOI: 10.1145/3582269.3615599 (2023) by Hadas Kotek, Rikker Dockum, and David Q. Sun. The purposes of this research are to investigate behavior of LLMs concerning gender stereotypes and to examine whether gender biases have been reduced or eliminated in recent models. The theory that this research use is the theory of gender bias in language models. This research uses a new testing paradigm as a method with responses of four recently published LLMs and compared by gender pronoun choices. This research finds LLMs more likely to choose occupations that align with gender stereotypes.

Previous research firmly established that gender is a significant sociological variable influencing linguistic variation, conversational strategies, and the perpetuation of stereotypes. Specifically, work focusing on social media or language models proved that these gendered patterns are evident across different mediums, including contemporary digital and computational contexts. The study builds on established sociolinguistic theories (Holmes/Lakoff and Coates) by applying them to the word choice in popular song lyrics (NIKI's heartbreak-themed songs), which is considered a simple, accessible example of everyday language and social context.

## C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research aimed to find out how gender can affect language by analyzing word choice in chosen songs. This study compared the results of women's and men's language in word choice. The method used for this study was a qualitative method to explore whether gender really influences the formation of a person's language. Qualitative research is a methodological approach that focuses on understanding human behavior, experience, and social phenomena through the collection and analysis of non-numerical data (Onwuegbuzie, 2012). Qualitative methods chosen by the researcher to delve deeper into the complexion of gendered language use. Qualitative procedures represent a different approach to scientific inquiry than quantitative research methods. Qualitative inquiry employs different philosophical assumptions, inquiry strategies, and methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Although the process is similar, qualitative procedures rely on text and image data, have unique steps in data analysis, and utilize a variety of inquiry strategies (Creswell, 2009).

Based on Moriarty (2011), It allows for new concepts and ideas to be accepted, leading to detailed descriptions, classifications, and the identification of patterns and typologies. This study used document analysis as a strategy to research further. The research carried out in detail with data collection procedures. Based on this case study, there was a hypothesis that gender really does influence a person's language. The source of data are lyrics in chosen songs that were accessed on YouTube and Spotify apps. The songs are Oceans & Engines (2022), *Lose* (2020), *La La Lost You* (2019), *Backburner* (2022), and

*Autumn* (2024). These lyrics were analyzed through document analysis. This document analysis was studied thoroughly and in depth in terms of the meaning of the results of the hypotheses studied. Documentation techniques are process of searching data of the variables on notes, transcripts, books, magazines, inscriptions, newspapers, agendas, and others (Latipah, 2021). The content analysis in this case involved 6 (six) chosen songs, which were analyzed by gendered language use. Data were collected through lyrics analysis. In this study, the researcher dug deeper and explored to answer the research questions. the technique of data collections, namely: (1) The researcher had chosen a work to analyze; (2) The researcher looked for songwriters of different genders. The researcher tried to find songwriter that express their work with expressive expression. Then, the researcher found NIKI from a lecturer's recommendation and because the singer is quite famous and widely discussed on Statuesque; (3) The researcher observed the songs which can be analyzed with the same theme, but packaged in different discourse styles. That is where the researcher determined the selected songs with a particular theme, heartbreak themed songs; (4) The researcher used the lyrics of chosen songs as the data packaged in document.

In a comprehensive analysis of selected songs, the researcher utilized a sociolinguistic framework through Descriptive Analysis to delve into the nuanced ways in which word choices can serve as linguistic markers of gender identity, revealing the complex interplay between gender and language. Therefore, the researcher only focused on the patterns of linguistics features. The researcher used data analysis techniques in the form of Descriptive Analysis. This analysis technique is used to describe cases in context to gain a deeper understanding. This technical approach is descriptive and exploratory to understand causal relationships. The data used is data that comes from qualitative sources or can be combined with quantitative data. This technique analyzes explanations with social, cultural, or historical factors (Cresswell, 2009). The researcher carried out several stages, namely; (1) The researcher managed and organized the data by transcribing the lyrics of the chosen songs; (2) The researcher read and took notes on the ideas that were relevant to the topic of this research; (3) Data analysis was carried out one by one and was described to find patterns. The researcher analyzed linguistic features in the lyrics of the selected songs; (4) Interpretations and generalizations explained how the findings from the cases studied can be applied in different situations and used a framework to strengthen the validity of the research; (5) The researcher represented the data by narrative descriptions.

## D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The linguistic features found in this study can be traced through the features of women's and men's language. Women's language can be categorized through six features: lexical hedges or fillers, super polite form or indirect speech, use of intensifiers, empty or expressive adjectives, tag questions, and precise color terms. Meanwhile, men's language can be categorized through four features: swearing and taboo language, dominant conversational strategies, straightforwardness, and powerful language. From the features above, researchers can find the use of women's and men's language in NIKI's songs through categorizing linguistic features.

The researcher discovered differences in language use between women and men. The researcher then linked this to the context of social norms. After analyzing the differences, they found that the context of social norms influences both women's and men's language use. This influence stems from the social construction of gender, which creates a relationship

between gender and social structure. This social structure influences gender to use different languages. The existing social structure creates social norms that regulate the position, behavior, and communication of a particular gender within society. The context of these social norms shapes different communication patterns between women and men. Social norms influence language use based on gender, resulting in different interaction patterns. Women use a more cooperative communication pattern as an interaction strategy and often express positive emotions. Meanwhile, men use a more competitive rather than cooperative communication pattern because, within the social structure, social norms surrounding men do not consider conflict to be something to be avoided. In addition to different communication patterns, social norms can also influence language use based on gender, considering the purpose of the communication. Women tend to use cooperative language because they aim to maintain relationships and avoid direct conflict that could damage them. Meanwhile, men tend to use more competitive language because they aim to assert their superiority over the other, thereby dominating and placing opposing opinions in the relationship.

**1. Linguistics Features in The Word Choices Characterizing Women's Language and Men's Language in NIKI's Selected Songs**

**a. Features of Women's Language**

**i. Lexical hedges or fillers**

The researcher found lexical hedges in the song *Oceans and Engines*. "***Well***, *nothing then, much has changed".* This lexical hedge is indicated by the use of the word "Well". This word choice indicates lexical hedges, which are a characteristic feature of female language. This word choice is used to express a statement that avoids absolute claims. This song was written to commemorate the heartbreak experienced at an immature age. The emphasis on Niki's situation and atmosphere suggests that not much has changed about her since the heartbreak is reinforced by the use of the word "Well".

The researcher found lexical hedges in the song *Lose*. "*And* ***maybe*** *in another life".* This lexical hedge is indicated by the use of the word "Maybe". This word choice indicates lexical hedges, which are a characteristic feature of female language. This word choice is used to express uncertainty. The use of the word "Maybe" in the middle of the song suggests that there are other assumptions and hopes for the love story that occurred in the past. The use of this word emphasizes emotional feelings that express uncertainty and seems to dream of repeating the same story but with a different ending.

**ii. Super polite form and indirect speech**

Researcher found a super polite form in the song *Oceans and Engines*. "***My mother said the younger me was a pretending prodigy****".* The sentences used are indirect speech. The songwriter describes a situation through implied meaning. The purpose of using this form is to create a less harsh impression when making a claim. The choice of words in this lyric fragment refines the use of language to claim something that has happened in the past. The choice of this word is used as an expression of feelings about the depiction of characters told in the past from someone else's point of view. Telling the story from another person's point of view helps clarify the character depiction of the characters in this song.

Researcher found a super polite form in the song *Backburner*. "***Asian Calvinism***, *we made it out of that".* The sentences used contain implied meaning. The purpose of this form is to create a simile. This sentence could be indirect speech. The song's author

does not clearly describe the meaning of the term "Asian Calvinism". The meaning of the terms used is left for listeners to understand based on their individual perceptions. The use of previously refined language also adds to the super polite impression and further emphasizes the presence of indirect sentences. Niki explores personal perception which allows listeners to feel the atmosphere and situation depicted in the song based on personal perception.

**iii. Empty adjective or expressive adjective**

Researcher found expressive adjectives in the song *Oceans and Engines*. "*Something **beautiful** died".* The song's word choice reinforces the expression in expressing feelings. The goal is to use metaphors in the form of adjectives. These words don't have a definite meaning, but they still serve as supporting elements to make sentences more expressive. The choice of the word "Beautiful" in this song helps to frame something that is beautiful but can no longer be saved. We can think of this as a parable symbolized by the word "Beautiful". The parable in question is the love story told in this song which happened in the past and can no longer be continued and there are no longer any hopes that can be granted. The use of this word choice suggests that the love story that "Beautiful" emphasizes cannot be repeated. Actually, even though it is not the word "Beautiful", the author can still use other word choices without changing the meaning of what is implied.

**iv. Use of intensifiers**

Researcher found an intensifier in the song *Autumn*. "*I must've thanked my lucky stars **too much**".* In this song, the word "too much" emphasizes the expression of the word that follows it. This word choice can also be categorized as an intensifier. Although this word has its own meaning, in the context of the sentence in which it is used, it functions only as an intensifier. In "thanked my lucky stars too much", the word "too much" indicates that the gratitude or happiness she feels for her lucky love is at an excessive level. First, it shows that gratitude or love that was initially sincere has become excessive to the point of being detrimental. Second, it emphasizes the gap between expectations and reality from "lucky stars" associated with good fortune, changing to "dust" which symbolizes emptiness or loss. In the context of this song, these lyrics describe the phase of realizing that a relationship that was once considered precious now brings pain. Niki emphasizes emotional depiction and expressive explanation to strengthen the contrast of the changing atmosphere in the song so that it reaches the listener.

**v. Tag Questions**

Researcher found tag questions in the song *La La Lost You*. "***Does** the trick for all of the things left unsaid, I'm".* The word choice implied tag questions. It is the same term as "Doesn't it?". The songwriter was asking questions and seeking validation. The use of tag questions in this song sounds like something sarcastic. The use of tag questions in this song looks different from what is in other songs. In the context of this song, the tag question used can be related to the context of sadness that doesn't know where it will end. The use of this choice of words can be seen as a refined point of view wrapped in a question.

**vi. Precise colour term**

The researcher found that there was a choice of words using precise color terms with signs of using the word "Indigo" in *Oceans and Engines*. "*Under the still and clear*

***indigo****".* The word indigo is a sign of the color blue, which is different from other blue colors. The use of word choices like this can be found as a feature of women's language. The use of word choice in this lyric fragment is actually used to describe emotional stress metaphorically. Niki intends to make the depiction of the atmosphere in this song more visible and easy for listeners to understand. The word "Indigo" here can actually be replaced with the word "Blue" as a metaphor for "Sky" (Oxford Dictionary). However, the choice of words that are more precise reflects that there is an emphasis on an atmosphere that can be more gloomy than "Blue", which usually when described as a parable of the sky can be a clear day. This is what differentiates the use of precise color terms in this song is very important.

**b. Features of Men's Language**

**i. Swearing and taboo language**

Researcher found that in the song *Oceans and Engines*, Niki used taboo words and swear words. "*'Cause while you're* ***wolfing down liquor****, my soul, it gets sicker".* One of them is in this lyric fragment. Niki discovered the word "Wolfing" which can be interpreted as standing up greedily. Then, there is also the word "Liquor" which means alcohol is consumed. This word choice uses taboo language, especially in the context of this song where women are the main characters. In discussing female stereotypes, "Wolfing down liquor" tends to sound very dominant and can be said to be taboo language to apply to women. Therefore, the use of this choice of words can be included as one of the characteristics of male language features.

**ii. Dominance Conversational strategies**

The researcher found indications of the dominant use of conversational strategies from the choice of words in *La La Lost You*. We can see this through how Niki makes dominant claims. The words **"*Bet your feet feel numb*"** are a claim that does not require refutation. This claim is wrapped in the word "bet" which can seem to soften the use of an absolute claim. However, by choosing the use of words as a whole, this shows the existence of a form of power that can provide a claim that is sufficient to offend the interlocutor. The use of this choice of words can create and trigger conflict in conversation strategies. This shows dominance to be able to make a claim that does not need to be refuted. This is why it can be characterized as one of the features of men's language.

**iii. Straightforwardness**

The researcher found that there was a use of straightforward language choices in the choice of words in this song. In this song, there is the word ***"It's pathetic, but at least you are too"***. Immediately label the situation "pathetic" and immediately convey the assessment to the listener. No or softening, just blunt emotional truth. His qualifications are sometimes honest and unadorned, making his sentiments all the more raw. This blunt delivery heightens the emotional impact feeling like an unfiltered confession rather than a carefully crafted statement. This can cause conflict and is one of the characteristics of men's language.

**iv. Powerful language**

The researcher found powerful language in the song *Autumn*. "***All you do is blindside me, it's hard to be brave****".* One characteristic of powerful language can be seen in this lyric. The use of the phrase "All you do is blindside me" which shows this phrase is a form of explicit accusation, without mitigation. There are no words like

"sometimes" or "I feel like" to soften the meaning, but she immediately accuses the other person's actions only of surprising or hurting from behind. In the next phrase, there is the phrase "it's hard to be brave" which, although it is an admission of weakness, Niki conveys it honestly and directly, which actually strengthens the impression of courage in expressing her pain. In the context of this song, Niki creates a moment of confrontation with raw emotion, contrasting with other parts that are more reflective or poetic. This makes this verse an example of powerful language that challenges the stereotype of soft female language.

The researcher found out what linguistic features are used in NIKI's song that has been analyzed to see the use of women's language and men's language. The word selection that was analyzed tends to show significant differences. The researcher has examined the word selection to classify whether it is part of women's language or men's language. The word selection has then been examined based on its linguistic features. The linguistic features in women's language include the use of lexical hedges and fillers, super polite and indirect speech, use of intensifier, empty adjective, tag question, and precise color term based on Lakoff's theory (Holmes, 2013). Then, in men's language, the linguistic features include swearing and taboo language, dominance conversational strategies, straightforward language and polite-less word, and powerful language based on Coates' theory (2004). After examining the data based on its linguistic features, the researcher found that there were differences between the use of women's language and men's language, which could be dissected through descriptive analysis by looking at the context of word choice in the song.

## 2. Women's and Men's Language Features in The Context of Social Norms in NIKI's Selected Songs

In this section, the discussion explains the use of women's language and men's language in selected songs from NIKI based on the context of social norms. The researcher found that there are significant differences between the use of women's language and men's language when classified through linguistic features. In the five songs, the use of women's language and men's language shows that the perspective of language use based on gender is different. Based on the analysis that the researcher has done, the use of women's language in NIKI's songs identifies the expression of emotional and deep feelings in a subtle way. Meanwhile, the use of men's language in NIKI's songs shows straightforwardness and expression of emotions that are conveyed in a straightforward manner. A deeper analysis can be seen in the following explanation.

Based on the analysis of data in the form of song lyrics, the researcher found that these songs use emotional words related to expressions that highlight emotions. In these songs, out of a total of 105 data, women's language appears 65 times while men's language is used 40 times. When associated with the context of the heartbreak theme, the choice of words in these songs tends to emphasize the expression of sadness and the struggle to rise from the past. The use of hedges is often found, which shows that the songwriter wants to emphasize the doubts in the song she wrote. The songwriter also implies sadness to herself with indirect sentences. To emphasize the explanation of feelings, the songwriter uses empty adjectives. The songwriter emphasizes emotional expression through the lyrics she wrote. That is why these songs have the characteristics of women's language, which tends to want to show validation of feelings and a little doubt. Meanwhile, the language of men in these songs can be represented by several words that directly describe the existence of a limitation

as an effort to rise from sadness. The expression of disagreement was described by the use of men's language, which was considered a straightforward and direct command.

The choice of words in these songs mostly used women's language with cooperative and reflective language. The songwriter tends to use collaborative language. The use of lexical hedges or fillers, super polite or indirect speech, intensifiers, expressive adjectives, tag questions, and precise color terms are the features that emphasize the emotional expressions. The use of women's language is used to express longing and loss by prioritizing the connection with the listeners emotionally. The songwriter also describes emotional feelings in detail to build feelings of empathy and communication. The word choices also tend to avoid direct conflict with the softened and cooperative word choices. This shows how women demonstrate a conversational strategy that is collaborative and empathetic in rapport talk. Although the theme of these songs is heartbreak, the songwriter still provides positive expressions such as hope and reflection. This reflects the social norms where women will build conversations collaboratively. However, in some choices of words, there are also some language styles used by men. The choice of words that tend towards men's language reflects a competitive attitude. There is a difference in how women's language is used to provide positive expressions, and men's language tends to use competitive language.

The choice of words in these songs was about emotional experiences and interpersonal relationships. The purpose of choosing women's language can be reflected that women express vulnerability to be understood by others to maintain relationships and avoid conflict. Although these songs tend to be dominated by women's language, there are also several communication styles with men's language. Several lyrics are direct and straightforward, which reflect that men's communication style tends to be more competitive in expressing dissatisfaction without avoiding direct conflict. The use of men's language is intended to provide dominant demands with the use of direct language and tends to express limitations directly with the presence of swear words that indicate a competitive nature. The language used shows dissatisfaction and is open to conflict in relationships that are conveyed firmly and directly, which reflecting the goal of men in a more competitive approach. There is also confrontational and competitive language that shows direct disagreement but is still wrapped in a gentle way and focuses more on empathy and understanding, which can still reflect the purpose of communication from men.

The researcher found that NIKI, as a female songwriter, often uses feminine language but also employs bolder, more dominant, or confrontational language to emphasize feelings and emotions. This comparison confirms that linguistic features are strategically chosen to express either a cooperative or competitive approach, thereby enriching the understanding of gendered linguistic patterns within a specific social context.

## E. CONCLUSION

1. Linguistic features analyzed in this song include features in women's language and men's language. In women's language, linguistic features include the use of lexical hedges or fillers, super polite form or indirect speech, use of intensifiers, empty or expressive adjectives, tag questions, and precise color terms. Meanwhile, in men's language, it includes swearing and taboo language, dominance conversational strategies, straightforwardness, and powerful language. The researcher analyzed 49 data points that showed significant changes between the use of words that tend to indicate more feelings and detail expressed in women's language and the use of words that indicate power and

dominance expressed in men's language. From the data that has been collected by researchers, there is a use of language based on gender in the songs that have been analyzed.

2. Researchers found that the use of female language is more common because it depicts more emotional expression, which is a form of rapport where the listeners of the song can feel the impression of the heartbreak theme, which requires a clear and appropriate depiction of feelings. There are differences between the use of language in women's language and men's language. Researchers found that this depends on the purpose of conveying the meaning of the lyrics through word choice. For example, researchers found that the use of women's language is intended to describe feelings that are conveyed subtly to show a cooperative nature. On the other hand, researchers found that the use of men's language is intended to describe the dominance of the words conveyed to show a competitive nature. Niki, a writer who truly demonstrates freedom of expression through her lyrics, makes excellent use of word choice. As a woman, Niki often uses words that are characteristic of feminine language. However, in some of her songs, to emphasize feelings and emotions, Niki can choose bolder, more dominant, and more conflict-free words, typical of men's language.

For further research, the researcher suggests conducting research on NIKI songs by expanding the corpus, such as expanding the number of songs or researching other artists. Further researchers can conduct more in-depth linguistic analysis, such as analyzing other features, lexical semantics, or other linguistic analyses. This research can be a helpful guide for English Literature Department Students to conduct research in the field of gender and language. It can help add references and be a reference for written works in the same field. The researcher hopes that after reading this research, readers will be encouraged to listen to works by NIKI or other artists with more critical thinking. Readers can see how the choice of words used can form a different communication pattern. The researcher hopes that the research can help readers raise awareness of how gender can bias the language used.

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