

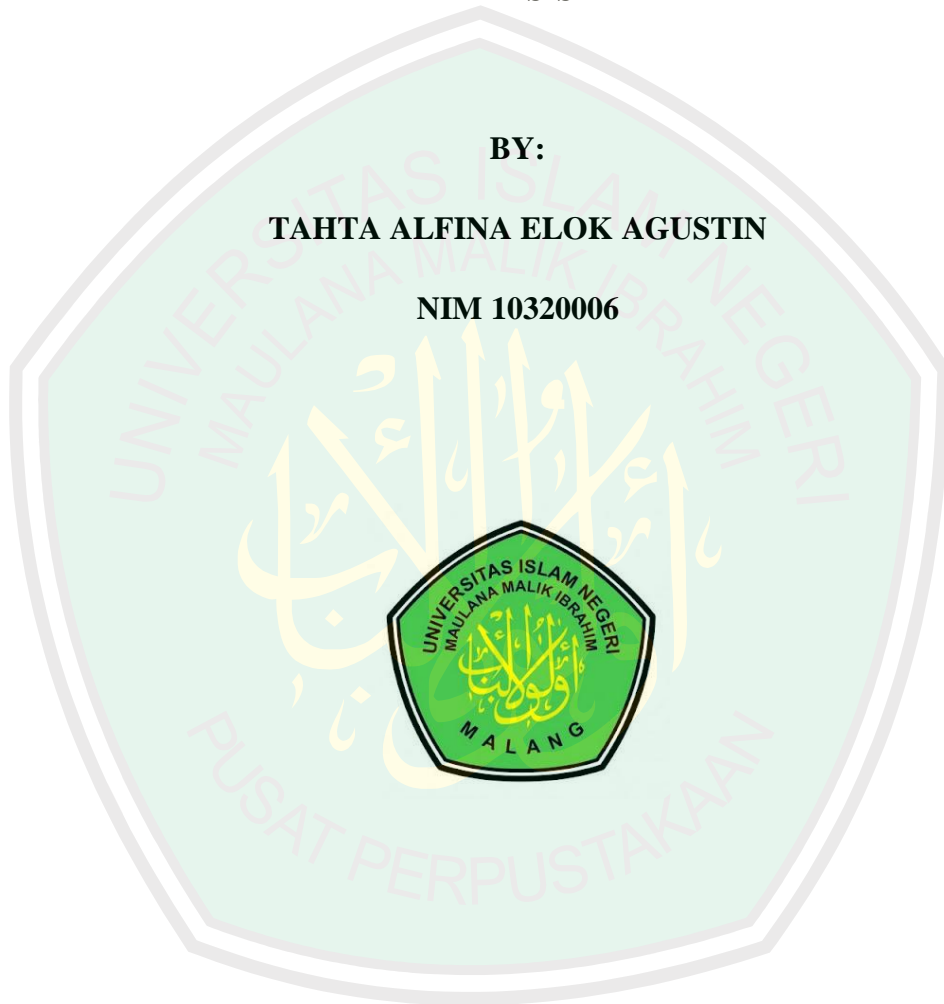
**GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE USE OF LINGUISTIC FEATURES IN  
CHAT ROOM**

**THESIS**

**BY:**

**TAHTA ALFINA ELOK AGUSTIN**

**NIM 10320006**



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LETTERS**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM  
STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF MALANG**

**2014**

**GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE USE OF LINGUISTIC FEATURES IN  
CHAT ROOM**

**THESIS**

Presented to  
Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S)  
in Department of English Language and Letters

By:  
Tahta Alfina Elok Agustin  
NIM 10320006

Advisor:  
Drs. H. Basri Zain, M.A, Ph.D  
NIP 19681231 199403 1 022



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LETTERS**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM  
STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF MALANG**

**2014**

## STATEMENT OF THE AUTHENTICITY

I state that the thesis is I wrote entitled “Gender Differences in the Use of Linguistic Features in Chat Room” is truly my original work. It does not incorporate any materials previously written or published by another person, except those in quotations and bibliography. Due to the fact, I am the only person who is responsible for the thesis if there is any objection or claim from others.

Malang, 08 September, 2014

The Writer,

TahtaAlfinaElok Agustin

## APPROVAL SHEET

This is to certify that TahtaAlfinaElok Agustin's thesis entitled "Gender Differences in the Use of Linguistic Features in Chat Room" has been approved by the thesis advisor for further approval by the Board of Examiners.

Malang, 5 Oktober 2014

The advisor,

on behalf of,  
the Head of English Language and  
Letters Department.  
Secretary of the English  
Language and Letters Department,

Drs. H. BasriZain, M.A, Ph.D  
NIP19681231 199403 1 022

Dr.Syamsudin, M.Hum  
NIP 19691122 200604 1 001

Acknowledged by  
the Dean of  
the Faculty of Humanities,  
Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang

Dr.Hj. Istiadah, M.A  
NIP 19670313 199203 2002

## LEGITIMATION SHEET

This is to certify that TahtaAlfinaElok Agustin's thesis entitled "Gender Differences in the Use of Linguistic Features in Chat Room" has been approved by the Board of Examiners as one of the requirements for the degree of SarjanaSastra (S.S) in English Language and Letters Department, Faculty of Humanities, Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang.

The Board of Examiners

Signatures

Drs. H. DjokoSusanto, M.Ed., Ph.D (Main Examiner)  
NIP 19670529 200003 1 001

\_\_\_\_\_

Rina Sari, M.Pd (Chair)  
NIP 19750610 200604 2 002

\_\_\_\_\_

Drs. H. BasriZain, M.A, Ph.D (Advisor)  
NIP19681231 199403 1 022

\_\_\_\_\_

Approved by  
the Dean of  
the Faculty of Humanities  
Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang

Dr.Hj. Isti'adah, M.A  
NIP 19670313 199203 2 002

## MOTTO

And these examples We present to the people, but none will understand them  
except those of knowledge. (Al-Ankabut 29:43)



## DEDICATIONS

*This thesis is dedicated to my beloved parent, Bapak Ahmad Sudarmono and  
Ibu Luluk Munawaroh who always support me. Thanks for everything.*



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I express my gratitude to the Lord of the universe, Allah SWT, for His blessing and mercy, and the prophet Muhammad SAW, so I can accomplish my thesis entitled “Gender Differences in the Use of Linguistic Features in Chat Room” as the requirement for the degree of SarjanaSastra. It would not have been possible to write this thesis without the help and support of the kind people around me, to only some of whom it is possible to give particular mention here.

Above all, I would like to thank my family, especially for *Bunda* and *Ayah* who have given me unequivocal support throughout, as always, for which my mere expression of thanks likewise does not suffice. This thesis would not have been possible without the help, support and patience of my advisor, Drs. H. BasriZain, M.A, Ph.D, not to mention his advice and unsurpassed knowledge of doing research in linguistics that has been invaluable on both an academic and a personal level, for which I am extremely grateful.

Therefore, I wish to thanks to the entire lecturer in Humanities faculty especially English language and letter’s lecturer who have influenced me throughout my academic career, teach me and introduced me to science especially in English language area during my study in this university

Last, I would like to express my deep gratitude and respect to my best friends for their support and encouragement, especially for *Koploers*, thanks for everything. Therefore, I wish to thanks to my friends in PMII IbnuAqil (especially for *SapuJagad*), *Bugenvillian*, and all my friends everywhere. Also, I want to



express my thanks to all people who accompanied me to drink a cup of coffee when I looking for the inspiration for my thesis. For any errors or inadequacies that may remain in this work, of course, the responsibility is entirely my own.

The writer



## ABSTRACT

**Agustin, Tahta A. E.** 2014. *Gender Differences in the Use of Linguistic Features in Chat Room*. Thesis. Department of English Language and Letters. Faculty of Humanities. Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang. Advisor: Drs. H. Basri Zain, M.A, Ph.D

Keywords : Chat Room, Linguistic Features. Gender

---

Computer Mediated Communication is an electronic way to communicate with other people by utilizing the internet, such as using email, text messaging, and other social networks. Therefore, the chat room that will be analyzed is *The Student Room*, an online forum where the students across the world can share and discuss their ideas. This study aims to investigate the linguistic feature that is used in chat room. Also, this study reveals on the gender difference in using those linguistic features.

To get the answer of the research question, the researcher used the theory formulated by Danet (2001) about linguistic feature in digital writing. In doing this study, the researcher used the descriptive qualitative research to be applied on this study. However, the data were collected by taking nine thread representing nine forums as listed. From these nine threads, the researcher directly coded every word that is included as those linguistic features. Therefore, in answering the second research question, the researcher selected the sample of data by taking 5 representatives of men and women for every thread.

The result of this research is there are 8 of 9 linguistic features used in chat room discussion. It comprises multiple punctuation, eccentric spelling, capital letter, description of action, written out laughter, emoticon, abbreviation, and all lower case. There is no asterisk showing to give the stress of a word or a sentence. Further, the second research question provides the result that there are two linguistic features including capital letter, and abbreviations are dominated by men. They used those linguistic features in various form. Therefore, some of linguistic features comprise eccentric spelling, written out laughter, and all lower case are dominated by women. Meanwhile, in the field of multiple punctuation and emoticon, the researcher concludes that between men and women used it equally.

Further research is recommended to investigate another area of CMC whether it is spoken or written conversation such as IRC, email, and etc because in this study has proven the linguistic features in chat room in (BBS) and the gender differences in using those linguistic features.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Cover Page .....  | i         |
| Inside Cover Page .....   | ii        |
| Statement of the Authenticity .....   | iii       |
| Approval Sheet .....  | iv        |
| Legitimation Sheet .....  | v         |
| Motto .....   | vi        |
| Dedication .....  | vii       |
| Acknowledgements .....  | viii      |
| Abstract .....  | x         |
| Table of Contents .....   | xi        |
| <b>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION</b> .....  | <b>1</b>  |
| 1.1 Background of the Study .....   | 1         |
| 1.2 Statements of the Problems .....  | 4         |
| 1.3 Objectives of the Study .....   | 5         |
| 1.4 Significances of the Study .....  | 5         |
| 1.5 Scope and Limitation .....  | 6         |
| 1.6 Definition of Key Terms .....   | 7         |
| <b>CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE</b> .....   | <b>8</b>  |
| 2.1 Speech and Discourse Community .....  | 8         |
| 2.2 Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), Computer Mediated<br>Discourse Analysis, and Virtual Community ..... | 11        |
| 2.3 Language and Gender .....   | 13        |
| 2.4 Linguistic Features in Digital Writing .....  | 14        |
| 2.5 Previous Studies .....  | 23        |
| <b>CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHOD</b> .....   | <b>26</b> |
| 3.1 Research Design .....   | 26        |
| 3.2 Research Instrument .....   | 26        |
| 3.3 Data and Data Source .....  | 27        |
| 3.4 Data Collection .....   | 29        |

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 3.5 Data Analysis .....  | 30        |
| <b>CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION .....</b>                   | <b>31</b> |
| 4.1 Findings.....  | 34        |
| 4.1.1 Linguistic Features.....                                     | 34        |
| 4.1.2The Gender Differences in the Use of Linguistic Features..... | 51        |
| 4.2 Discussion .....   | 56        |
| <b>CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION.....</b>                   | <b>60</b> |
| 5.1 Conclusion .....   | 60        |
| 5.2 Suggestion.....  | 61        |
| REFERENCES .....   | 63        |
| APPENDICES.....  |           |

## ABSTRACT

**Agustin, Tahta A. E.** 2014. *Gender Differences in the Use of Linguistic Features in Chat Room*. Thesis. Department of English Language and Letters. Faculty of Humanities. Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang. Advisor : Drs. H. Basri Zain, M.A, Ph.D

Keywords : Chat Room, Linguistic Features. Gender

---

Computer Mediated Communication is an electronic way to communicate with other people by utilizing the internet, such as using email, text messaging, and other social networks. Therefore, the chat room that will be analyzed is *The Student Room*, an online forum where the students across the world can share and discuss their ideas. This study aims to investigate the linguistic feature that is used in chat room. Also, this study reveals on the gender difference in using those linguistic features.

To get the answer of the research question, the researcher used the theory formulated by Danet (2001) about linguistic feature in digital writing. In doing this study, the researcher used the descriptive qualitative research to be applied on this study. However, the data were collected by taking nine thread representing nine forums as listed. From these nine threads, the researcher directly coded every word that is included as those linguistic features. Therefore, in answering the second research question, the researcher selected the sample of data by taking 5 representatives of men and women for every thread.

The result of this research is there are 8 of 9 linguistic features used in chat room discussion. It comprises multiple punctuation, eccentric spelling, capital letter, description of action, written out laughter, emoticon, abbreviation, and all lower case. There is no asterisk showing to give the stress of a word or a sentence. Further, the second research question provides the result that there are two linguistic features including capital letter, and abbreviations are dominated by men. They used those linguistic features in various form. Therefore, some of linguistic features comprise eccentric spelling, and all lower case are dominated by women. Meanwhile, in the field of multiple punctuation and emoticon, the researcher concludes that between men and women used it equally.

Further research is recommended to investigate another area of CMC whether it is spoken or written conversation such as IRC, email, and etc because in this study has proven the linguistic features in chat room in (BBS) and the gender differences in using those linguistic features.

## ABSTRACT

**Agustin, Tahta A. E. 2014.** Perbedaan Gender dalam Penggunaan Fitur-Fitur Linguistik pada Forum Online. Skripsi. Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris. Fakultas Humaniora. UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang

Dosen Pembimbing : Drs. H. Basri Zain, M.A, Ph.D

Kata Kunci : Forum Online, Fitur-Fitur Linguistik. Gender

---

Komunikasi Menggunakan Komputer adalah sebuah cara elektronik untuk berkomunikasi dengan orang lain dengan memanfaatkan internet seperti menggunakan email, forum online, dan jejaring sosial yang lain. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mencari fitur linguistik yang digunakan dalam forum online, yakni *The Student Room*. Penelitian ini juga mencari perbedaan gender dalam penggunaan fitur-fitur linguistik tersebut.

Untuk mendapatkan jawaban dari penelitian tersebut, peneliti menggunakan teori dari Brenda Danet (2011) tentang fitur-fitur linguistic dalam tulisan digital. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif untuk dapat diterapkan dalam penelitian ini. Kemudian, data penelitian ini dikumpulkan dengan mengambil sembilan thread yang mewakili dari sembilan forum yang ada didalamnya. Selain itu, untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian yang kedua, peneliti mengambil sample yang diambil dengan cara mengambil 5 sample dari laki-laki dan perempuan pada setiap thread.

Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah ada 8 dari 9 fitur linguistik yang digunakan pada forum online. Hal ini meliputi penggunaan tanda baca yg berlebihan, ejaan yg esentrik, penggunaan huruf kapital, deskripsi mengenai tindakan, tertawa secara tertulis, emotikon, singkatan, dan penggunaan huruf kecil. Peneliti tidak menemukan penggunaan tanda bintang (\*) untuk memberikan penekanan akan suatu kata pada data. Kemudian, jawaban dari pertanyaan penelitian kedua menghasilkan bahwa ada dua fitur linguistik meliputi penggunaan huruf kapital dan singkatan yang didominasi oleh laki-laki. Selain itu, fitur-fitur linguistik selanjutnya seperti ejaan yg esentrik, tertawa secara tertulis dan penggunaan huruf kecil telah didominasi oleh perempuan. Sementara itu, dalam hal penggunaan tanda baca yg berlebihan dan emotikon tidak didapatkan dominasi. Kedua gender sama-sama menggunakan fitur tersebut.

Penelitian selanjutnya disarankan untuk meneliti ranah lain dari CMC, baik berupa percakapan lisan maupun tertulis, seperti IRC, email, dsb karena pada penelitian ini telah menggunakan fitur-fitur linguistik pada chat room (forum online) dan perbedaan gender dalam menggunakan fitur-fitur linguistic tersebut.

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with the introduction of this study. For introduction part, the researcher explains background of the study, research questions and research objectives, significances of the research, and scope and limitations.

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

CMC or (Computer Mediated Communication) is a way of communication using media, such as computer, hand phone, an etc. that relies on the internet that has an important role in recent day. By using CMC, people do not need to communicate directly using face to face conversation. There are two types of CMC: synchronous CMC and asynchronous CMC. Synchronous CMC is a type of CMC where people communicate with other people in real time and it is done simultaneously, such as internet relay chat (IRC) and video conferencing. Otherwise, asynchronous CMC is a type of CMC where people can postpone their conversation (not simultaneously), such as e-mail, instagram, and bulletin boards system (BBS).

As cited in Laghos & Zaphiris (1993), through the use of CMC applications, online community is emerging. This online community is referred to cyber societies, cyber communities, web groups, virtual communities, web communities, virtual social networks, or e-communities. They assume that the

dependence of human employing the technology causes the existence of online community. Therefore, in online communities (also known as virtual community), computer-mediated systems such as social online services allow people to establish and maintain personal relationships within the context of shared values and beliefs, or while pursuing a common goal (Arrasvuori & Olsson, 2009). It involves exchange of information in text, audio, and/or video formats that are transmitted and controlled by the use of computer and telecommunication technology (Bobas, 2001). Those tools make human communication easier since the sender and the receiver of message do not need to meet directly, or face to face. Moreover, the online communities have their own media to gathering each other, such as in *facebook*, fan-page, BBS, and etc. From those media, the researcher is interested in doing the investigation on a bulletin board system (BBS) or more commonly called as chat room.

Chat Room is a site where people can share their ideas in an online community. It is also known as Internet Forum and Online forum. This medium is selected because chat room is one of CMC form that is easy to access. Also, this medium is categorized as asynchronous CMC which contains more people than other CMC forms, such as email, text messaging, and etc. that are more personal. Moreover, there are some examples of chat room in Indonesia, such as Kaskus, Diskusi Web Hosting, and GameDev Indonesia. Therefore, in international forum there are several chat rooms using English such as Gaia, XDA-developer, U-buntu, and etc. However, on this research, the researcher focuses on investigating one of international chat rooms namely *The Student Room*. It is a kind of chat



room that is fully joined by academic people who has particular interests toward the education. Though the member of this chat room is only students, they do not only discuss about their study. In particular forum, there are some threads about other education are being talked, such as hobbies, interests, and etc.

There are some linguistics phenomena that can be used to analyze the CMC, such as identity, meaning making, semiotics, and etc. Above all, the researcher wants to figure out the linguistic feature of the data. However, linguistic features of CMC in spoken or written communication are different. Though they have the same meaning, but they have different process. Hence, this research uses the theory of linguistic feature which specially used in written communication from Brenda Danet (2001). He composed nine linguistic features that especially used in digital media including multiple punctuation, eccentric spelling, capital letter, and asterisks for emphasis, description of action, written out laughter, emoticons, abbreviation, and all lower case. Therefore, this research is directed to the gender difference in using those linguistic features.

Gender is different with the term sex. Basically, people often define the gender definition as physical condition of someone. Yet, actually the definition of gender is more than words. It is related with the role of male and female in society. Besides, it also has connection with the stereotype or thoughts developing in society. Moreover, Coates (2004) defines gender into two definition including sex and the second is a social life of someone based on their sex. In line with this research, the researcher tries to figure out the gender difference in the use of those

linguistic features. It refers to the comparison between male and female when they use those linguistic features in chat room.

In line with this study, there are some researches concerning with language and gender. In the terms of face to face conversation, there is a research about female speech pattern used in the characters of *Sexy and the City* movie (Permatasari, 2010) and a TV show, *The Big Bang Theory* (Granqvist, 2013). Therefore, in the part of written conversation, there are some studies such as in English and Persian film scenario (Nemati and Bayer, 2007) and in a famous novel, *Oliver Twist* (Mugair, 2009). Moreover, there are also some researchers that specifically studied about language and gender in CMC, such as the issue of gender in the study about SMS messages in Norway (Ling, 2005) and in the dyadic synchronous CMC (Mei, 2006).

The majority of previous studies explained above used the theory of Robin Tolmakh Lakoff (1975). She composed ten linguistic features based on the stereotypes of female. Therefore the present study would like to fill this research gap by analyzing the gender differences chat room by identifying the linguistic features in digital writing based on Brenda Danet's perspective (2011). Moreover, the object of the study is in written conversation, so it must be appropriate with the theory.

## 1.2 Statements of the Problems

In line with the background of the study in preceding discussion, the general research problems can be formulated into more specific case as follow;

1. What kinds of linguistic features used in *The Student Room*?
2. What are the gender differences in the use of those linguistic features in *The Student Room*?

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the problems stated previously, this study is intended to comply with the following purposes;

1. To identify the linguistic features used in *The Student Room*
2. To find out the gender differences in the use of those linguistic features in *The Student Room*

## 1.4 Significance of the Study

This research is expected to give valuable contribution to the field of language and gender in the field of Sociolinguistics. The data of this research were taken from chat room which never be used by the previous researcher in the Department of English Language and Letters in Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang. Therefore, the significance of this research is expected to give the benefits to the writer and the readers theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the researcher expects that this research can become a

brief literature for those who need to widen the knowledge and understanding on the field of Sociolinguistics, especially on the language used by each gender.

Practically, the researcher expects the readers to more utilize the existence of technology as a tool to discuss something by joining the forum discussion in virtual community, especially for female as the minimum participant of the chat room.

People can easily access what people write in internet. Therefore, the researcher expects the reader to be more paying attention to their writing on chat room to avoid misunderstanding. For that reason, the study of CMC, especially which refers to online community in bulletin board system (BBS) is needed since the study of CMC is currently new in the area of English Letters and Language department. Thus, the researcher expects that this research would give the new idea for the readers to conduct the research in CMC.

### **1.5 Scope and Limitation**

In order enables to answer the formulated research problem appropriately, the scope and limitation of the study are considered as an essential thing to be emphasized. This research only focuses on analyzing language use in digital writing which is delivered by male and female in *The Student Room*, an academic chat room for student in the world. On that chat room, there are ten sub-forums which have particular area. However, considering the limited time, budget, and energy, the researcher decides to focus on nine threads from nine sub-forums only, that posted in 2014.

## 1.6 Definition of Key Terms

With the aim of getting the deep understanding of this research, the writer tries to elaborate some notions related to the research.

- a. Discourse community: a group of people that have the same goals or interest. They have their particular way in doing communication.
- b. Online/ Virtual community: a community that is emerge because their preference to employing the technology.
- c. Synchronous CMC: type of CMC that has simultaneous interaction
- d. Asynchronous CMC: type of CMC that the interaction is delay, not simultaneously.
- e. Chat room: a way of communication to share the knowledge or idea with another people using internet. This media is such as digital room where people discuss something with other member.
- f. Netizen: a term to call someone who uses internet. It is a composition from the word *net* (internet) and *citizen* (a member of particular country)
- g. Forum: a place on the Internet where people can leave messages or discuss particular subjects with other people
- h. Sub-forum: part of forum where the member can selects the subject
- i. Thread : a connected group of pieces of writing on the Internet, where people are talking about a particular subject.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter reviews the underlying theories of the study. The first part of the literary review will give an overview of speech and discourse community. The next part of the literary review clarifies the relationship between computer mediated communications (CMC). The third part elaborates language and gender. Forth is about digital writing features. The last is about previous studies. In conclusion, this part describes the theories which are used to analyze the problem.

#### **2.1 Speech and Discourse Community**

The term of speech community is broader than discourse community (Paltridge, 2006:17). Generally, those terms used to identify a group that has similar interest. Labov defines a speech community as a group of speakers unified by adherence to shared norms and attitudes towards those norms. In addition, Wardhaugh (2006:123) also mentioned the concept of ‘speech community’ by Hymes. He explained that the notion speech community is a difficult one to grasp in its entirety, for it depends on how one defines ‘groups’ in society. Similarly, discourse community and speech community formed because the same interest.

There are often discourse communities within discourse communities (Paltridge, 2006:26). The different discourse communities (family/home, school, workplace etc.) are characterized by various specific patterns of language use

(Pogner, 2005:5). Same as identity, every person must have more than one group. It is caused by the human status as social human being that always needs to interact from one community to other community. Thing that differentiate from those communities is the way to interact. It can be known by the code-switching, slang language, greeting, etc. it is also supported by Berkenkotter, Huckin, & Ackerman, (1988) that social groups are always in flux, their borders are usually permeable, and most individuals hold memberships in multiple discourse communities, all of which individuals may bring to bear on any single rhetorical act.

Discourse communities affect the way in which their members define problems and formulate solutions, i.e. acquire, transform and produce not only language but also knowledge (Pogner, 2005). It has their own norms, conventions, or expectation to manage their member. As classified by Killingsworth (1992), discourse community divided into two groups: local and global context. In a local context, He defines the local context as something concerns geographical or demographic description such as classroom, company, or office which the writer is associated. The discussion topic of this community is flexible. This community type is not only focuses on one particular subject, but also about simple subject such as hobby, interest, etc. Otherwise, global context can be simply understood as the wider area of local context. This type has no limited on physical area such as online community. In addition, this topic has a special interest. Since their communication using technology, they just communicate in particular subject.

As a cited in (Beaufort, 1997), Swales defines the concept of discourse communities as *socio-rhetorical* networks that are formed in order to work towards sets of common goals. There are three keys and inter-related concepts - discourse community, communicative purpose, and genre- are three main approaches to genre study. Moreover, he states some characteristics of discourse community, including common goals, participatory mechanisms, communication exchange, community specific genres, specialized terminology, and generalized expertise. First, a discourse community has a broadly agreed set of common public goals. Every member of discourse community has the same purpose in joining the discourse community. For example, the member of XDA-developer has the same reason in joining that forum discussion that is to know the development of android. Second, a discourse community has mechanisms of intercommunication among its members. As previous explanation, discourse community has their own area to interact each other. Herring (1985) calls it as a forum likes teleconference, meeting (face to face conversation), or another CMC such as chatting, texting, and joining the social media. Third, a discourse community uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback. In this sense, someone is listed as a member of discourse community if he participates in giving contribution or opening conversation with other member. If someone just listed formally as a member but never doing conversation with other member, he can't be assumed has discourse community because the purpose of discourse community is to exchange the information. Forth, a discourse community utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in

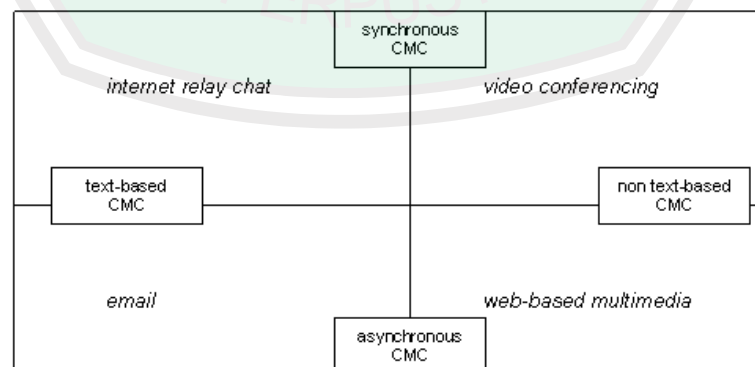


the communicative furtherance of its aims. Fifth, in addition to owning genres, a discourse community has acquired some specific lexis. It has a particular word such as jargon that symbolizes their group identity. Sixth, a discourse community has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and *discoursal* expertise.

## 2.2 Computer Mediated Communication (CMC)

CMC is communication that takes place between human beings *via* the instrumentality of computers' (Herring, 1996:1). It means that CMC is a communication mode, using computer as a tool to convey the message, such as using email, bulletin board, instant messaging, and etc. Thus, discourse of CMC exists to investigate the language use when it is mediated by computers. Moreover, Scotcit (2003) explains several advantages including the independence in time and place. People use CMC wherever and whenever they want. In addition, CMC is not only utilized as communication media to gain the relationship but also as learning media. In this sense, the learning process becomes more visible to learners and tutors. If the student gets difficulties, they can be asked questions without waiting for a 'turn'. On the other hand, CMC also has several weaknesses. In CMC, person has to communicate in written message. It becomes a bad thing because not all people are good in writing. Therefore, the paralinguistic cues (facial expression, intonation, gesture, body orientation) as to a speakers' intention are not available except the combination of keyboard writing forming emotional language whether showing facial expression or emphasis.

CMC has two dimensions; Synchronous and Asynchronous. A synchronous situation, a user enters a chat room and joins an ongoing conversation in real time, sending named contributions which are inserted into a permanently scrolling screen along with the contributions from other participants (Crystal, 2006:2). The forms of this synchronous types is such as IRC (Internet relay chat), Skype (using video conference), and instant message. On the other hand, in an asynchronous situation, the interactions are stored in some format, and made available to users upon demand, so that they can catch up with the discussion, or add to it, at any time – even after an appreciable period has passed (Crystal, 2006:12). In this sense, the interaction can be processed in postponed time or not simultaneously. The example of asynchronous type is such as bulletin board, mailing list, and e-mail. Both of these CMC dimensions have the similarity. These groups formed because the member of this community has the same interest on particular thing, whereas it is amateur or specialist. In order to get the more understanding, see the *4-way matrix* below:



*4-way matrix* of Simpson

Simpson (2003) identifies the CMC types by making the Table above. Synchronus CMC types such as IRC (text-based CMC) and video conferencing (non text-based CMC). Conversely, the asynchronous CMC types just like an email (text-based CMC) and web-based multimedia (non text-based CMC).

### **2.3 Language and Gender**

Language and gender has been a popular area in sociolinguistics (Mei, 2005). Sociolinguistics is one of linguistics branches concerning with social/ society. However, this research talks about linguistic features used by particular gender along with their function. There are several theories in understanding gender difference in linguistic features. Those theories are categorized into three models, including deficit, dominance, and difference model. However, Lakoff (1975) as cited in Mei (2005) mentions ten features for female language. She analyzes the influence of gender using dominance model, a researcher investigates the domination of particular gender of something. It could be in society, conversation, etc. Otherwise, in difference model,

These ten features are as follows:

1. Lexical hedges or fillers, e.g. you know, sort of,
2. Tag questions, e.g. she is very nice, isn't she?
3. Rising intonation on declaratives, e.g. it's really good.
4. Empty adjectives, e.g. divine, charming, cute.
5. Precise color terms, e.g. magenta, acqamarine
6. Intensifiers such as just and so

7. Hypercorrect grammar, e.g. consistent use of standard verb forms.
8. Superpolite forms, e.g. indirect requests, euphemisms.
9. Avoidance of strong swearwords, e.g. fudge, my goodness.
10. Emphatic stress, e.g. it was a BRILLIANT performance.

Maltz & Borker (1982) have a review about a list of male and female speech features shown by Americans in shown in mixed-sex conversations. They mention several characteristics of female speech features including asking questions more frequently, more active in maintaining or facilitating conversations, using more positive, minimal responses, being silent to show dissatisfaction after being interrupted; and using pronouns more frequently to acknowledge the conversation partners. On the other hand, male speech features' including more interruption, challenging or disputing their conversation partner; ignoring comments from their conversation partner, more mechanism for topic control, more direct declarations.

## **2.4 Linguistic Features on Digital Writing**

Danet (2001:17) proposed nine linguistic features. He focused on the linguistic features used in digital writing. Those features including multiple punctuations, eccentric spelling, capital letters, asterisks for emphasis, written out laughter, description of action, emotions, abbreviations, and all lower case.

### **2.4.1. Multiple Punctuation**

Punctuation is the special mark added in writing to particular function. As cited by Straus (2008:52), there are several types of punctuation, including

Periods (.), Ellipsis Marks (...), Commas (,), Semi Colons (;), Colons (:), Question Marks (?), Exclamation Points (!), Quotation Marks ("..."), Parentheses (...), Apostrophes ('), Hyphens (-), and Dashes (-). Those punctuations have different function. For example, periods (.), it is one of punctuation form that has the function to end the statement. Another example is commas, a punctuation form to separate the words. Those words can be derived from the same or different part of speech.

Generally, this punctuation mark is applied once. Yet, there are some writings that used this multiply. It is called by multiple punctuations. The example of the use multiple punctuations as follows:

1. ITISCLARISAHESAID :your grades are fine. i'm reasonably certain your a-level choices are fine (especially as you're dropping textiles). and as for doing joint honours - i'd say if you really want to study both english and french go for it. should you get an interview the english and french tutors will consider you for both single honours courses anyway, and you may receive an offer for only one of the subjects if you were to perform poorly in one of your subject interviews.  
there might be some hitch with what i've just said... if so i'll let someone more knowledgeable correct me.
2. UniMasterMindBOSS: Stupid thread. Players don't win the World Cup, teams do.  
Argentina won't win anyway, they are \*\*\*\* and the players only play for themselves.
3. TolerantBeing : 2 months...was that one hour a week??? Jesus 🤔
4. Midget Princess : I am so confused!!! I don't even think I can visit these colleges before I accept them!!!  
And yeah, I am still waiting for Imperial's reply... and I don't even wanna think about Oxford now...  
HELP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Based on the data above, there are some examples of multiple punctuations. In the first example, there are multiple full stops (ellipsis dots). This multiple full stops refer to express pause. The second example is multiple asterisk marks. This punctuation mark refers to block the negative word that will be read by the general public. The third example is containing multiple question marks and the last example is multiple exclamation marks. Both of them refer to emphasis a word or sentence. In addition, Danet (2001) explains that Multiple punctuation such as periods, question marks, and exclamation marks comes at the end of the phrase or sentence, e.g. “Are you ready???”.

#### **2.4.2. Eccentric Spelling**

Eccentric spelling means using the strange sign formed as letter to represent the original letter. For example, the word *sez* from the sentence “what did you *sez*?” represents the original word that is *says*. Furthermore, Danet and Herring (2007:169) mentioned that there are several forms for the existence of this spelling, such as prolonged pronunciation, reduplication of letters, and words. Cvjetkovic (2010) uses the notion *unconventional, spoken like spelling* to call this informal spelling. He also explains about the repetition of letter in detail. As a cited on his research, Werry (1996:56-61) explains that “a complex set of orthographic strategies designed to compensate for the lack of intonation and paralinguistic cues that interactive written discourse imposes on its users” is made use of in Internet chat. This statement also clarifies that this repetition caused to the difference intonation on the pronunciation. For example:

Type back soooooooooon!

The writer repeats the letter o in many times. From this example, we can see that the word *soooooooooon* is refers to the word *soon*. The writer of this sentence as if wants to emphasize this word.

Another form of eccentric spelling is typography writing. Typography writing or typos refers to the some words that have been misspelled as a consequence accidental keystrokes. For example:

Jason : but hiw cime yoir medicine degree will earn u more money than  
ither people by that much?

Based on the example above, there are some words that are categorized as typography writing, such as the word *hiw* from the word *how*; *cime* from the word *come*; *yoir* from the word *your*, *ither* from the word *other*. If it is looked with the right norm, those words are less correct because it is not appropriate with the original word. Yet, since those words are written in digital media, it does not make a problem as long as the reader can understand those words.

#### **2.4.3. All Capital Letter**

Therefore, the next linguistic feature mentioned by Danet (2001) is the use of all capital letters (also called as upper-case). As cited in Cvjetkovic (2010), Crystal (2001:87), the writings that using upper-case format reputed as the shouting and usually avoided. In line with Crystal's statement, capital letter assumed as visual equivalent of shouting (Danet, 2002:8). In addition, as mentioned by Crystal (2006: 37), capitalization (especially of full sentences) was also found to be used to give the impression of shouting. The example as follows:

Excel : Don't you know that you really lazy, dude!

Tom : SHUT UP YOUR MOUTH! IT'S NOT YOUR BUSINESS.

The example above is a chat excerpt between two persons. They have difference in their writing. Excel, the first speaker uses the Sentence case way as the common form in writing. Meanwhile, Tom as the second speaker replies the Excel's post using uppercase. This upper-case form refers to the indication of giving warning.

#### **2.4.4. Asterisks for Emphasis**

The third linguistic feature in digital writing is asterisk. This asterisk symbol is exists to mark that a word or phrase is stronger than other word. Crystal (2006:96) also clarifies that the word bracketed by asterisks means that the writer want to emphasize it. The following examples in the use of asterisks:

This is a *\*very\** important point.

Based on the example above, the word *very* was bracketed by asterisks. In this sense, the writer wants to state that this part is very important, so the people whom he is talking with have to pay attention on that point.

#### **2.4.5. Written out Laughter**

*Netizen* also use some terms such as “hihihi”, “hahaha” and “hehehe”, to indicate the written out laughter. For example:

1. Kim :Um, are you sure about that? More like 21k haha
2. Ophelia :Here's yr stuff back



Hamlet :Not mine, love. Hehehehehe ;-D

On the first example, Kim uses the word *haha* to convey a joke. Therefore, the second example, Hamlet uses the word *hehehe* to express the pleasure or joy. In addition, typing “hehehe” is also obviously a device to convey a sound, in this case the sound of laughter (Danet, 2001:18). Also, the word *hehehe* is used infrequently than the word *hahaha* to express the joke.

As cited on Danet (2007:171), the category of written-out laughter can be extended to include other vocalizations and non-linguistic sound/noise such as music, such as the word *Mmmm*, *popopop*, and etc. There is also the example of this linguistic feature in Japanese, such as the word *kyaa*, *chan*, *een*.

#### 2.4.6. Description of Action

Cvjetkovic (2010) categorizes asterisk as one of the logotypes form (part of grammatical feature). It has the function to enclose a word or utterance. For example:

John : How are you my beautiful lady? \*kisses hand\*.

Kim : Fine, dude! \*smile\* What about you?

On the chat excerpt above, John uses the asterisk’s sign in the phrase *kisses hand* that refers to make it as if he kisses Kim’s hand directly. Therefore, Kim also writes the word bracketed by two asterisks. She uses the word *smile* to make it as if she is smiling at that time. Thus, the use of those asterisks is to symbolize the writer’s gesture on that time. It is also encouraged the situation of conversation as

if they doing face-to-face conversation. As one of the digital writing's feature, Danet (2001) called it as Description of action.

#### **2.4.7. Emoticon**

Emoticon comes from the word emotive and icon. It is a unique sign (written or graphic) that must be exist in online communication. It is one of paralinguistic cues that usually found in several communication media, such as SMS, chatting, email, etc.

Emoticon is a manner to express the emotion through presenting the human face (Kalman & Gergle, 2014:188). It gives the impact on the message that will be conveyed. In addition, they also added that emoticon has highly context sensitive manner.

Derks et al (2007:843) mentioned that Fisher (submitted for publication) already told that expressing emoticons using face-to-face conversation and using CMC had difference. He conveyed two reasons for this assumption. First, because when someone expresses it using CMC, it is slower and less spontaneous. The next reason is that it is nonverbal, there is no emotional information.

Wood and Smith (2004) define smiley as the arrangements of keyboard characters read side-on and used to suggest a message's emotional intent. Sallo (2011) clarifies that smiley is a general sign that can be interpreted from language or culture. It represents the facial expression. However, the forms of smiley vary. In these forums, there are two types of smiley form: graphic and non-graphic. Graphic means the smiley prepared by the forum while non-graphic means that

the smiley formed by keyboard writing. Though both of them have different form, they have similar meaning. These examples as follows:

1. Andrew : Thanks for the help guys. 😊
2. Troll : Aw...don't be nervous! 😬 🤔, 😊😊 (:hugs:)
3. Snipper : It's an awful situation to be in. Like I've got the feeling I can do it myself if I work round the clock, but my head's saying I need basic teaching again :/

Those three examples presented in various form. The first and the second example are categorized as graphic emoticons. Meanwhile, the last example is categorized as keyboard writing. Furthermore, those graphic emoticons are also different. The first emoticon is formed by typing colons followed by bracket “:)”. It symbolizes the happy condition. In addition, the emoticon in the second example is moveable. It is formed by the word *huge* bracketed by two colon (:huge:). Since this emoticon is moveable, it has the moves as follows:

First, the emoticon performs 😬 that represents someone standing alone. Next, the emoticon moving as if there are another people getting toward on the first person (emoticon) likes 🤔. The last form is 😊😊. It refers to the emoticon as if forming the two persons hugged each other.

Therefore, the last example is the use of keyboard typing emoticon. It has formed by typing colons followed by oblique line “:/”. It refers to the sign of boring face.

#### 2.4.8. Abbreviation

Abbreviation means a short form of a sentence/ phrase. This linguistic feature can be categorized as conventional abbreviation and unconventional

abbreviation. In conventional type, the abbreviation is agreed and used in general by many people. It indicates that the abbreviation generally accepted in Standard English. It can be taken from the initial part of sentence (acronym), such as FYI for “For your Information”, and ASAP for “as soon as possible”.

The acronyms that exist on a digital writing have many examples. As cited on Nazaryan, Gridchin (2006), it commonly used to describe the laughter, such as the word *lol*(laughing out loud), *lmao*(laughing my arse off), *rotflol*(rolling on the floor laughing out loud), *omg*(oh my God), and so on. Moreover, another form of abbreviation also formed as making it in a simple writing. It called as rebus writing. For example the word *l8r* that represents the word later. In this sense, Cvjetkovic (2010) called it as unconventional abbreviation. This type of abbreviation only accepted in some people that understand with the meaning. Furthermore, people who usually used this kind of abbreviation categorized as creative and innovative because they can shortening word in a unique way.

#### **2.4.9. All Lower Case**

The last is all lower case such as “hi, how are you! did you hear about tom?”. It is usually applied in e-mail. Writing using all lower-case is more efficient, because the user can save the keystroke in the terms of capitalization in a post. Also, this way of writing the use of only lower-case letters rarely causes ambiguity (Cvjetkovic, 2010:14). Above all, these linguistic features are listed as strategies to enhance readers’ and writers’ ability to experience the words as if they were spoken (Danet, 2001:18).

## 2.5 Previous Studies

In the previous chapter, the researcher had explained about the previous studies related to the research. Watts, Nugroho, and Lea (2003) identify the email discussion. They are looking for the conversational context and social identity in computer mediated communications using email exchange (GNU Mailman). It was used for political debate by two groups of Indonesian NGO members during the Indonesian constitutional crisis in 2001.

Another studies concerning with the CMC, especially about linguistic feature is including an investigation about the linguistic feature in online forum (Kadir, 2012) and an investigation of letter repetition as one of linguistic feature (Kalman & Gregg, 2014). Kadir (2012) investigate about the linguistic feature used in online forum. They analyzed several linguistic features that commonly used in conversation, including Letter/ Number Homophones, Eccentric Spelling/ Accent Stylization, Capital Letters, Written out Laughter, Emotion/Emoticon, Clippings, and Other linguistic feature (Code Switching). This research examines the use of e-learning in Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia. The result of this research proved that the code switching applied in discussion forum is similar with face-to-face conversation. Also, it reveals on the participants of the research used various linguistic features in online discussion.

Therefore, Kalman and Gregg (2014) studied about Letter repetitions in computer-mediated communication. It is one of CMC cues which augment the verbal content of the message other than all uppercase letters, asterisks,

emoticons, punctuation marks, chronemics (time-related messages) and letter repetitions.

As cited in Newman et al (2008), Coates and Johnson (2001) pointed out that the study of language provides a uniquely “social” perspective on the field of gender differences. In the sense of gender difference, the researcher also found several studies that examine the gender difference in using the linguistic feature. For example, in face to face conversation, there is a research about female speech pattern used in the characters of *Sexy and the City* movie (Permatasari, 2010) and a TV show, *The Big Bang Theory* (Granqvist, 2013).

Moreover, the researches about gender differences in the use of linguistic features also exist in written conversation including Nemati and Bayer (2007) and Mugair (2009). Both of them are examine three features of Lakoff’s hypothesis, including tag question, hedges, and intensifier. Nemati and Bayer (2007) did an investigation about the linguistic feature in English and Persian film scenarios. The finding of this study has contrary result with Lakoff hypothesis. It indicates that Lakoff’s ideas concerning tag questions, hedges and intensifiers cannot be held, given the corpus under study and thus the three null hypotheses stated earlier can be upheld. Meanwhile, Mugair (2009) studied about the language form used by male and female in *Oliver Twist*, a famous English novel. The data of this research was taken by the utterances on that novel. The result of this study proves that there is no significant difference between males and females with regard to the use of hedges. As cited in Mugair (2009), he states that the result of this

research is similar with the Holmes research (1986:82). He did not find any significant difference between the two genders.

In addition, there are also some researchers that specifically studied about language and gender in CMC, such as Ling (2005) and Mei (2006). Ling (2005) studied about the issue of gender in SMS messages in Norway. The results show that the SMS messages of young female are longer and with more complex structures. Also, their messages contain more features of written languages. Therefore, Mei (2006) analyzes the difference in linguistic features of the interactions between male and female when they are having dyadic synchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC). The data of this research was taken by the instant message interaction by the adult user in Hongkong. Here, Mei examines linguist features which include the choice of subject of the directive sentences, the use of modal clusters in directives, the use of swears, the use of Cantonese final particles to show emotions and the use of minimal responses.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

This chapter discusses the research design, research instrument, data and data source, data collection, and data analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Creswell (2012, p. 2) mentioned two approaches in the research method; quantitative and qualitative. These approaches have the similarity and differences. Both of them contain the research question that is aimed to give the direction to conduct the research. Moreover, sometimes it also has the similarity in the data collection procedure. Meanwhile, the use of these approach research determines the procedures to be applied to the object of the study. Quantitative uses the statistical analysis but in qualitative research is not.

This study is qualitative research as it deals with the description and explanation of the phenomenon being studied. To advocate this research, the researcher merges it with some assumptions and theories which have been proven by any linguists. It can also be called by descriptive analysis because the data is collected from online text and the researcher tries to analyze this text with her own interpretation.



### 3.2 Research Instrument

Since this proposed research is classified as qualitative research, the research instrument is collecting and then analyzing the data. Moreover, the researcher plays important role as she collects, observes, and analyzes the data. Furthermore, in qualitative, the data are collected through the experience and sufficient knowledge of the researcher. Hence, only human enables to do this task

### 3.3 Data and Data Source

This research investigates one of internet forum discussion which is used by international students, namely *The Student Room*. This forum is selected because it has discussion rooms with many different kind of topic. Not only talk about something concerned with life style, entertainment, and gossip but also about education such as everyday issue, interests, or experience. Moreover, it has special feature which explains the gender of user so that possibly to accessed by the researcher. Thus, it makes the researcher easier to categorize it based on the gender difference. However, there are several account on this community does not mention their gender. Here, the writer finally finds out the gender using the investigation toward the member's profile including the member's post.

The writer instantly downloads the data source from the link of site above then in the form of an online discussion site as follow:

#### The Student Room

<http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/forum.php>

There are nine forums on this chat room including Featured Forum, TSR community, Life & Style, Hobbies and Interests, Debate and Current Affairs, Study Help, University and University Courses, University and HE colleges, and Careers and Jobs. From these forums, the researcher took nine threads to be analyzed:

1. If Messi wins the WC, is anyone going to claim that Ronaldo is better
2. What salary are you realistically expecting to earn
3. Driving Lesson nerves
4. Worst Songs Of 2014 So Far
5. Are there actually ANY women on The Student Room
6. Resit A-Levels in a 3<sup>rd</sup> year
7. Everyone thinks me being pharmacist means im a failed doctor\_dentist
8. Oxford English and Modern Languages Students and Applicants
9. Job Interview Tips and Common Question

However, these threads are selected because some considerations. First, there are many members of this community that are interested in this forum. It has been provided by the viewer of the thread. The next reason is those threads are categorized as popular threads.

From those threads, the researcher got the data in the form of utterances containing linguistic features in every post for every thread. Since not every post containing linguistic features, the researcher arranged it on the table to classify it.

### 3.4 Data Collection

The data of the presented research are collected into several steps. First of all, the writer looked for the virtual community by looking for the internet. The researcher found a list of internet forum in *Wikipedia*, a free encyclopaedia for *netizen*. On that article, the researcher found several popular chat rooms using English in the world, such as *4chan*, *Ubuntu Forum*, *XDA-developer*, etc. Therefore, the researcher chose one of the chat rooms inserting specific gender explanation between male and female. From these chat rooms, the researcher chose *The Study Room* to be analyzed. After determining the chat room, the researcher directly checked out *The Student Room*'s forum by clicking the available link. Next, the researcher selected nine threads from a list of popular threads/ latest discussion thread to be analyzed. In this sense, the researcher considered to select the sub-discussion forum that posted in 2014. Besides, the researcher also considered the high number of threads and post. The amount of thread and post must be affected to the people who viewed the thread. Then, the researcher read and understood those nine threads to identify the data in the form of utterances containing linguistic features based on Brenda Danet's perspective.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

This research had several steps in analyzing the data. Firstly, to make it easier to analyze, the researcher classified the data on the table based on linguistic features. Those are multiple punctuation, eccentric spelling, capital letter, asterisks for emphasis, written out laughter, description of action, emoticon, abbreviation, and all lower case. In this section, the researcher found examples of each linguistic feature on data. The researcher did not mention or explain all of them in Chapter IV, but taking several examples that could represent another one.

The next step was that the researcher compared the use of linguistic features and then counted the amount of the use of linguistic features between male and female. Since the medium of this research can be accessed by everyone freely, they can easily hide and change their identity. Many people used the language style contrasting with their sex, such as male is used to applying the female language and also female is used to applying the male language. In this sense, the researcher got their identity by seeing their sex identity on their profiles. Yet, there are also some of profiles that do not show their sex identity. Hence, the researcher identified their sex by paying attention to the tendency of their language style.

The researcher also compared the result of the analysis with the previous researchers with the same study. Finally, after analyzing the data, the researcher concluded the result of the analysis.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the study that covers the identification and linguistic features (multiple punctuations, eccentric spelling, capital letters, asterisks for emphasis, written out laughter, description of action, emotions, abbreviations, and all lower case) which exist in The Student Room. Moreover, the following analysis also refers to the comparison between male and female in using those linguistic features.

#### **Description of the text**

As updated on September, 2014, the researcher finds that *The Student Room* currently has 1,524,841 members with 2,529,623 threads and 48,487,142 posts. This chat room has ten forums discussion including Featured Forum, TSR community, Life & Style, Hobbies and Interests, Debate and Current Affairs, Study Help, University and University Courses, University and HE colleges, and Careers and Jobs.

The first forum is Featured Forum. This forum contains the recently news that is popular. Since the data taken in 2014, it coincides with the World Cup moments. Most of the featured forum is talking about it. Therefore, the researcher takes the thread listed as popular thread which comes from one of TSR member's account, The AnusFiles which is entitled "If Messi wins the WC, is anyone going

to claim that Ronaldo is better?”. The topic of this forum related to the comparison of two famous soccer players, between Messi and Ronaldo

The next forum is entitled TSR community. It is a miscellaneous forum. The member freely discuss about everything on this forum. On this forum, the researcher takes a thread entitled “What salary are you realistically expecting to earn”. It is one of thread on TSR Community forum sharing about the expected career and salary.

Therefore, the participant of this forum also possible to sharing their experience related to their life such as health, relationship, fashion & beauty, fitness, money and finance, also everyday issues in Life & Style Forum. From this forum, the researcher analyzes a thread from a member’s account, esjae which is entitled “Driving lesson nerves”. This thread is discussing the tips to overcome the nervous feeling when having a driving test. There are many people in this thread sharing their experience when they learn to drive.

Next is Hobbies and Interests forum. This forum specially discuss about the member’s hobbies and interests such as sports, pet, technology, food, etc. One of threads taken by the researcher to be analyzed is entitled “Worst Songs of 2014 So Far”. It is a part of a thread that focusing on music. However, this thread is concerning with the worst song of 2014 based on the member’s opinion.

The next forum is Debate and Current Affairs. It is a forum that concerning with the expostulating several subjects such as society, politics, religion, and history. From these subjects, the researcher focuses on the thread

that has highest number of post and viewer which is entitled “Are there actually ANY women on The Student Room”.

Therefore, the member can discuss anything related to their studies in Study Help. On this forum, the member easily shares their difficulties and tips about their study. One of Study Help’s threads entitled “Resit A-levels in a 3rd year” is taken to be analyzed by the researcher. However, this study is about the pretension of thread starter to study over again the subject having bad score to get the better score.

Next is University and University Course forum. The participant of this forum can talk anything about their concentration of studies. The thread that be discussed on this research is entitled “Everyone thinks me being pharmacist means I’m a failed doctor dentist”. It discusses about the profession as pharmacist which is assumed to be lower status than dentist.

Next forum is University and HE colleges. This forum talks about university profiles. Moreover, these universities also have classification that depends on their area. Therefore, the researcher selects a thread concerning with Oxford University which is entitled “Oxford English and Modern Languages Students and Applicants”. There are many member of this chat room that is interested to discuss about this university. It can be seen from the highest number of post and viewer on this forum. However, this thread is talking about her chance in selecting the study concentration.

The last is Career and Job forum. On this forum, the member freely discuss about anything concerning with job, such as curriculum vitae, job description, etc. therefore, the researcher wants to analyze a thread entitled “Job Interview Tips and Common Question”.

#### **4.1 Findings**

This part presents what the researcher found on the data, including linguistic features in *The Student Room* and the comparison of gender in the use of those linguistic features. However, the researcher presents the analysis using the following steps. First, the researcher gives the information where the researcher found the datum. Second, the researcher presents the post that using linguistic features. In this sense, the researcher mentions the user, user’s post, and the chat excerpt around them. Furthermore, to make the reader are focus on the example of linguistic features, the researcher gives the underline toward the sign or utterance that categorized as particular features in every example in this following analysis. Third, the researcher explains the context of the example. It comprises the speaker and what they are talking about on the chat excerpt. Therefore, after presenting the example, the researcher elaborates the meaning of the linguistic features.

##### **4.1.1 The Linguistic features used in *The Student Room***

Based on Danet (2001), there are nine linguistic features that commonly used in digital writing. Those features including multiple punctuations, eccentric spelling, capital letters, asterisks for emphasis, written out laughter, description of



action, emotions, abbreviations, and all lower case. In order to make it simple, the researcher only takes the data that representing the whole of data.

## 1. Multiple punctuation

On this first aspect, the researcher finds several examples of multiple punctuations. One of them is from Datum 1. On this data, the researcher figures out the example of multiple asterisks. An excerpt for the Datum 1 containing multiple punctuations as follows:

Jordoooooom : People always make up excuses for Ronaldo.  
'Awww his team is \*\*\*\*'. First of all they have better  
players than both the USA and ghana. Unlike messi,  
ronaldo was probably his teams worst player. If he didn't  
miss all those sitters maybe they could have went through.  
Messi winning the World Cup doesn't automatically mean  
he's better. But if he carries on to single handily drag  
argentina to the trophy then it further proves his greatness.  
#72

ManchasterUnited :It annoys me when people say 'Messi/Ronaldo isn't  
as good as Pele/Maradona/'. I firmly believe the ultimate  
test of a footballers ability is in the Champions League.  
Messi and Ronaldo have smashed that tournament year in,  
year out. I don't give a \*\*\*\* about the amount of goals Pele  
scored for some \*\*\*\*tyBrazilian team. Amateur league.  
#83

This post is written by an account namely Manchester united. He wants to give the response about this thread discussing about the comparison between Messi and Ronaldo, two famous football players. In this example, the writer types the asterisks more than once. This asterisk sign functioning as the cover of the original word which is assumed as not appropriate word to be looked in general, such as vituperation.

The second punctuation that comes more than once is multiple periods.

The researcher found it in Datum 2. The following example:

- CJKay : I live in a professional house share in Cambridge, which isn't really much cheaper than London. My rent comes to about £137.50 a week, including bills, council tax, all that jazz.  
In fact, my house share back in London was actually quite a lot cheaper. Income tax knocks off about £6k, but I average £400 a month after all expenses like food and travel. #69
- Brownbearxo : Its down to personal preferences I guess...£400 a month is far too little for the life I live! #76

On the chat's excerpt above, brownbearxo replying the CJKay's message about her living cost. She uses the triple punctuation periods in the middle of her statement. It means that she wants to restrain her utterance a little while. After typing those triple punctuation marks, she continues her statement.

Other data containing multiple punctuations is from Datum 3. The following post:

- Reue : Im sure it wont be any worse than my first lesson. Sat in the car and my instructor literally went "Right, off we go"...didnt tell me which pedal done what or anything. Luckily I already rode a motorcycle so knew about clutches and gears. #5

As the previous example, this post also containing multiple full stops. Reue telling her experience about first lesson in driving in briefly. She types full stops three times after she told that Her instructor said, "Right, off we go" to her. Those multiple punctuation also symbolize that her statement has a continuance. It has proven by the existence of next utterances after those full stops. Otherwise, those full stops have a contrary meaning with the function of full stop that refers to finish the statement. It is used in the end of sentence.

The next punctuation that founded by the researcher is multiple exclamation marks. The researcher found it in Datum 4. The following post:

Flyyoufools : #Selfie. #5

Spotify95 :Cor I hate that selfie song with a passion, so does my parents!!!! 😊 #7

Based on the post above, Flyyoufools and spotify reply the post in Datum 4. In that example, there are four exclamation marks that come together in one sentence. Actually, the amount of the exclamation marks is not important because the meaning will not be different if he used one exclamation mark. In the case of repetition of exclamation marks, !!! is counted as one use, not three uses(Cho, 2010). However, these exclamation marks are to strengthen the message about an exclamation. Also, this punctuation used to create the effects of spoken delivery.

Another multiple punctuation that exists on data is question marks. The researcher took the example from Datum 7.

Lalableh : everyone plays an important role and a good health professional should understand that if not , who care am happy 😊and in terms of respect , nothing is more important to me than self respect and I couldnt do that if I gave into social pressure 😊btw which uni??? #92

This chat excerpt was taken from Datum 7 that talking about being a pharmacist.

In this sense, Lalableh writes a post containing multiple question marks. It indicates as if the writer wants to emphasize his question. In addition, though it has written in many times, the meaning of the punctuation is not changed. It refers to give the sign in a question.

## 2. Eccentric spelling

The second linguistic feature that be discussed is eccentric spelling. There are two categories on eccentric spelling; repetition of letter and typography writing.

The first categories is concerning with repetition of letter. Almost every data is contains it. This repetition can be happened in the middle or the end of the word. The following example on Datum 4:

Spotify95 : What are your worst songs of the year so far? List as many or as few as you would like! 😊 #1

Lucy\_mac\_1999: #Selfie  
I Like Let It Go and I know It came out late last year but I just want to say for the record, It is sooooo overrated, as are most of the songs from Frozen :) #12

Based on the chat excerpt above, Lucy\_mac\_1999 gives the opinion toward the thread starter that discussing about the worst song in 2014. Based on Lucy\_mac\_1999's post above, there is a phrase formed by *so* added by the letter *o* more than one and followed by the word *overrated*. It refers to her assumption that the song *Let it Go* from the *Frozen* movie is better than the Selfie song. In line with this example, the researcher also found another post containing the eccentric spelling of the word *sooooo* in another datum, such as in Datum 2 (#32), Datum 4 (#4), and Datum 7 (#6).

The next example of the eccentric spelling is on Datum 2.

Insomniacz : state expected career and salary please 🤖 #1

FreudianSlip : If someone could just give me a job, that'd be greeeeeat... Although I'm not so sure about the direction I'm going to take now that I've graduated I think, realistically, I'd be happy so long as I was earning £18,000 and above, per annum. #10

On this post, FreudianSlip gives a comment on Datum 2. He did not mention his expected job but he wants the salary £18,000 per annum. Furthermore, he uses an eccentric spelling in the word *greeeeeat* that formed by the repetition of letter *e* in the word *greeeeet*. This word means that if someone could give him a job, it will be something that very good to him.

The next example of eccentric spelling is also found in Datum 3. The example as follows:

Trustmeimlying :I start with my first lesson on thursday..over here we have to do 12 lessons compulsory  
I have to be back in college by September the 1st so I have roughly 2 months..  
is it realistic to aim to get the test done and get my licence:?  
im a complete novice..not a clue etc. #30

TaylorJJJJ :Thats realistic! I passed mine last week after only 2 months and I was a complete novice too and pretty crap for the first month!#41

Trustmeimlying :awwjaysusthats great! some novice has done it!p  
2 hard months so ...I can do this 😎  
congrats btw..haveyeh bought a car then:? #42

TaylorJJJJ :oops posted twice! Ah thaanks 😊 You can definitely do this!! I crammed quite a few lessons in (think I had 12 2 hour ones in total). I'm car-sharing with my granny but she's in Australia til April so it's allll mine til then! 🇬🇧 #44

Based on this chat excerpt, an account namely TaylorJJJJ uses the eccentric spelling in the word *thanks* and *allll*. Both of them are categorized as the eccentric

spelling because the repetition of particular letter. Therefore, the meanings of those words are also the same. It refers to strengthen the message. In the word *thaanks*, the writer wants to saying thanks to trustmeimliying's post which saying that his experience is great. In addition, the word *allll*, another eccentric spelling also has a same function with the previous one that is to emphasize the word.

Furthermore, there are another examples containing eccentric spelling that could not be explained by the researcher in detail likes the presented examples above. Those are including the use of the word *doinggg* for *doing* (Datum 2 #34), *howww* for *how* (Datum 2 #153), and *loool* for the word *lol* (Datum 3 #35).

The second form of eccentric spelling is typography writing. As the previous explanation, it refers to a small mistake in a text when it was typed. The example as follows:

SolitarySniper : I got As in chem3, bio6 and an A in AS maths overall #17

Trouble21 : I know it's quite a few exams but if you're really looking for AAA it's jussomething you gotta do n work hard for ik sure you'll smash it next year #18

On the datum6, Trouble21 uses the word *jus*. Originally, this word is derived from the word *just*. Since the letter *l* is unwritten, it has categorized as the eccentric spelling that formed by typography writing or typos.

The next example of typography writing is in Datum 8.

Kutimagee : I am doing this course and I have a very nice time.

Karema66 :hello seeming as you do english at OXFORD. You may be able to help me...i need to find a poetry piece/drama/or prose which can be compared to or goes alongside "Love in

the time of cholera". Have you read it? Any suuggestions  
s'ilvous plait 😊 #26

In this example, the word *suuggestions* is derived from the word *suggestion*. In this sense, Karema66 wrote it in wrong spelling. However, typo is a common thing in digital writing. It does not make a problem as long as the reader can understand it. Another example of eccentric spelling also can be found in another datum; including the word *yass* for *yes* (Datum 2 #38), *craci* for *crazy* (Datum 3 #71), *licence* for *license* (Datum 3 #89), *wat* for *what* (Datum 4, #85), and *relitives* for *relatives* (Datum 7 #32).

### 3. Capital letters

The next linguistic feature is capital letter. Actually, the researcher finds many examples from TSR post using capital letter, but the researcher only takes three examples from the result including the use of capital letter in sentence, phrase and word.

Firstly, the use of capital letter in datum 7.

Anonymous : Everyone who is studying pharmacy who I speak to is a failed medicine or dentistry applicant who couldn't get AAA. Being a doctor or dentist means you are at the top of society but people dont see pharmacy the same. Dentistry and medicine is sooo hard to get into but pharmacy is really easy and I dont know why because pharmacy is a v hard degree. Every kid in my culture wants to be doctor or dentist and they see pharmacy as a back up - its so depressing. Also i know I will never be as well respected and ill never earn as much money I might not even get a job with all that im hearing.... I dont know why they dont make pharmacy AAA too and why they dont stop letting all these medicine and dentistry applicants put pharmacy as a 5th choice and why dont pharmacy applicants have to send their ucas application at the same time as dentistry and medicine? we are just second to them 😡 #1



Redferry : I just want to say: **I FEEL YOUR PAIN!!!!!!**

I did zoology and everyone now thinks I'm a failed vet. #5

This chat excerpt is talking about someone (Anonymous) story about his study.

She felt that someone who is taking pharmacy means that he is a failed medicine or dentistry. Moreover, this chat excerpt indicates that the sentence that written in all capital letter is considered as shouting.

Secondly, the use of capital letter in Datum 5. It is the example of the use all capital letter in the form of word. In addition, hugoalmeida replies a post by James Robertson that sharing their experience during retaking the particular course.

James R. : I got CDD at A2 last year in Maths, IT and Chemistry, Resat them this year and got A\*A\*B it takes alot of hard work but it is doable #43

hugoalmeida : hi there, well done!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! 🎉  
I want to retake the year, but Im not sure if my school will let me as they may say "it costs us money" and "you already have a university place go there"... parents wont let me study at home for whatever reason. but to be honest I dont really want to spend a year at home/away from an institution either... I know i can do better!!! i just needed some help. **THANKS!!!!** #49

On this post, Hugoalmeida wants to reply the James support about his study. He thanked to James R for his suggestion. Therefore, he types the word *thanks* in capital letter. Basically, the word that is typed in capital letter is visually more prominent as compared to lower case. It refers to giving the stress on that word, so James can catch the meaning of the post easily.



#### 4. Asterisks for emphasis

As the previous explanation, the asterisks also used to indicate the emphasis of a word or sentence. Fortunately, the researcher cannot find the example of this feature in TSR. Yet, the researcher found another form of emphasizing word using capital letter and eccentric spelling.

#### 5. Written out laughter

There are several examples of Written out laughter in data. Therefore, the researcher only takes one of them from Datum 3.

- Esjae : Block buying. Ten of them for like £190 😊(:))  
I hopefully won't be like that. Can't promise anything  
hahaha my uncle tried teaching me like lasts year. That did  
not end well hahaha#21
- TwinPort53 : Thats not bad 😊 (:))  
Haha we will see, I want an update tomorrow 🤔 (:p) #22
- Esjae : If there's no update. I've died hahaha! #24

Based on the chat excerpt above, those two members of TSR are talking about their experience in driving. There is an example of laughter that represented from the word “haha” or “hahaha” indicates that they want to tell a joke.

Another post containing laughter is in Datum 4. The example as follows:

Karmacrunch : I dislike the songs and I think that the titles reflect on what  
the song is going to be about. So yeah haha 😊#75

On this datum, Karmacrunch left a comment in Datum 4. She used the utterance *haha* to make the conversation is more comfortable. It is also referred to the

function of emoticon as cited in (Yus, 2011, p. 168). Those examples are the form of verbalizing emoticon. Though it has uttered on the same word but it has varied meaning.

## 6. Description of action

The next feature is description of action. On this feature, the researcher only gets one example, which is from Datum 3.

Esjae : South Wales 😊 I'm not sure where I'm going yet haha  
 Oh no 😞 I'm not sure about using the horn, I don't like using them haha#57  
 Trustmei'mlying : feck that \*beep beep\*gonnapretened I didnt know 🙄  
 #58

Trustmei'mlying, the writer of this post replies Esjae's post about driving experience. She uses the word *beep beep* bracketed by two asterisks (*\*beep beep\**). It refers to describing the user's action analogizing as if the user presses the horn.

## 7. Emoticon

The next linguistic feature that will be analyzed on this research is emoticons. It is the unique feature used in digital writing. People also called it as smiley. Wood and Smith (2004) define smiley as the arrangements of keyboard characters read side-on and used to suggest a message's emotional intent. On this research, the writer will not explain in detail about all signs or emoticons that exist on data, but the writer only explain some of them that commonly used by the TSR members in data analysis. In addition, the researcher explains several

emoticons that the way to define it is not only seen in literal, but also paying attention to the context of the sentence. The example as follows:

MinTheMooch : Thanks for the help guys. 😊

Based on the chat excerpt's above, MinTheMooch would like to express thank to everyone who participated in giving comment toward his post in datum 8. On his statement, he uses the graphic emoticon “😊”. This symbol formed by keyboard writing including colon “:” and closed bracelet “)”. It symbolizes the happy face of the writer. Most of TSR member used this kind of emoticon on their post.

Next emoticon, 😞 generally defined as sad face. The examples as follows:

1. Shahbaz :I am an asian and im going to be studying theoretical physics. My dad tried to persuade me to do medicine but I declined. Most my relativesdont even know what im studying LOL #32











Arithmeticae: I know that feel 😞 #33

2. Chaotic Butterfly : Initially not much more than something like 18k I'd be happy with a minimum wage right now 😞 #83

In this part, the researcher presents two examples from different datum. Basically, those two emoticons have the same form. It was formed by typing semicolons “:” followed by open bracelet “(“. The difference of these emoticons is on the use context. In the first example (taken from Datum 7), Shahbaz told about his decision in taking the department. Therefore, Arithmeticae replies his post. He conveyed his empathy by saying that he knew what Shahbaz feels on that time. Besides, he added the sad emoticon “😞” that symbolizing his sad face. Meanwhile, in the second example (taken from the Datum 2), Chaotic Butterfly

posted about his opinion about expected salary. She said that she wants to get the salary more than 18k. Also, she said that she is happy with her minimum wage on that time. Yet, in the end of the sentence, she inserts the sad emoticon. It has a contrary sense with the previous statement that she is happy to get that salary. She probably feels that it is a low wage. Thus, this part is the role of emoticon. It represents the feeling condition of the writer.

In line with this research, the researcher found many forms of emoticon. To make it easier to be understood, the researcher arranged it on the table.

| No. | Type of Emoticons            | Form  | Keyboard typing | Meaning                  | Datum        |
|-----|------------------------------|---|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| 1.  | Graphic Emoticons/<br>Static |  | :)              | happy                    | All of Datum |
| 2.  |                              |  | :(              | sad                      | 3, 6, 8      |
| 3.  |                              |  | :rolleyes:      | glancing                 | 1, 6,        |
| 4.  |                              |  | :sunglasses:    | Wearing sunglasses/ cool | 3            |
| 5.  |                              |  | :wink:          | Winking                  | 3, 4, 9      |
| 6.  |                              |  | :confuse:       | confused                 | 1, 3, 6      |
| 7.  |                              |  | :eek:           | surprised                | 3, 4         |
| 8.  |                              |  | :o              |                          | 1            |
| 9.  |                              |  | :p              | teasing                  | 3            |
| 10. |                              |  | :D              | laughing                 | 3, 6, 9      |
| 11. |                              |  | :S              | Worried/<br>Confused     | 6            |
| 12. |                              |  | :sigh:          | complaining              | 4,           |
| 13. |                              |  | :teehee:        | tittering                | 1, 3,        |















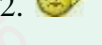

|    |  |  |             |                       |         |
|----|--|--|-------------|-----------------------|---------|
| 14 |  |   | :@          | angry                 | 3, 4, 6 |
| 15 |  |   | :\$         | blushing              | 3       |
| 16 |  |   | :erm:       | sad                   | 1,      |
| 17 |  |   | :hmmm:      | annoying              | 4       |
| 18 |  |   | :lolwut:    | Laughing then shocked | 6       |
| 19 |  |   | :U          | happy                 | 3       |
| 20 |  |   | :yy:        | Thumbs up             | 3,      |
| 21 |  |   | :lol:       | Laughing              | 1,      |
| 22 | Graphic Emoticons/<br>Moveable         | 1. <br>2. <br>3.  | :hugs:      | hugs                  | 3       |
| 23 |  |   | :happy2:    | Happy                 | 4       |
| 24 |  | 1. <br>2.    | :facepalm:  | frustrated            | 3,      |
| 25 |  |   | :don'tknow: | don't know            |         |
| 26 |  |   | :hmpf:      | bored                 | 2       |
| 27 |  |  | :yep:       | Keep nodding          | 2       |
|    |  |  | :giggle:    |                       | 2       |
| 28 |  | :O   | :O          | surprised             | 3       |
| 29 | Non<br>Graphic/<br>Keyboard<br>Writing | :P   | :P          | Teasing/<br>Sarcasm   | 3, 8    |
| 30 |  | :/   | :/          |                       | 2       |

Table: Emoticons

Based on the table above, the researcher divides the emoticon into two categories, including Graphic and Non Graphic Emoticon. In Graphic Emoticon, the researcher also divides it into two types, including Static or unmoved and Moveable. In addition, in the part of Graphic Emoticon which is moveable, the researcher describes the emoticon moves to make the reader understand about the moves.

## 8. Abbreviations

Abbreviation is the way to make a short form of a sentence by taking the initial letter of each word. Based on Danet and Herring (2007:171), there are two characteristics of abbreviation on digital writing encompasses acronyms such as *ILU* that derived from the sentence I Love You and the second is rebus writing. For example, CU from the word See You. The Student Room has several posts that using abbreviation. One of the posts containing abbreviation as follows:

LightBlueSoldier : Is that the same France who were reffed into a quarterfinal behind two shocking decisions? (Datum 1#25)

Wilfred : Deluded Ronaldo fans were disgruntled when that one went in. You won't even be able to clutch your final, solitary straw when Argentina win the World Cup 😊

xDave- : Idk what you're talking to me about tbh. #27

Based on the chat excerpt above, they are talking about the football player in Datum 1. xDave- uses the acronym *idk* on his post. This acronym is derived from the sentence *i don't know*. Therefore, the second acronym is *tbh*. This acronym is derived from the phrase *to be honest*. However, acronym is an abbreviation that

taking the first letter of each word. The aim of this feature is to save the time and space.

The next examples of abbreviation also found in Datum 5. Those examples are used to describe the abbreviations of laughter. Those are as follows:

Carbo Kill : Never really had a proper relationship. They sound nice though, I'd probably do all of the above except cooking because I can't even make instant coffee lmfao. Relationships sound nice though. Wish I wasn't a pussy lol, s'making me dpressed. #28

Carbo Kill give a comment on a thread that discussing about how to apply the mind to our girlfriend or our boyfriend. From this post, Carbo Kill uses an abbreviation that is acronym including *lmfao* and *lol*. However, *lmfao* is the acronym of *laughing my a\*\* off* and the word *lol* is from the phrase *laugh out loud*. This abbreviation is often used by many users in every datum. Moreover, those emoticons have the same function that is used to indicate a joke. Another example of acronyms that exist on data will be mentioned on this following table.

| No. | Abbreviation | Meaning              | Datum |
|-----|--------------|----------------------|-------|
| 1   | imo          | In my opinion        | 1     |
| 2   | tbh          | To be Honest         | 1, 2  |
| 3   | wtf          | What the f**k        | 4, 5  |
| 4   | fyi          | For your information | 5,    |
| 5   | IRL          | In real life         | 1     |
| 6   | OP           | Original post        | 5     |
| 7   | Tho          | Though               | 4     |
| 8   | M8           | Mate                 | 1     |

|    |      |                        |   |
|----|------|------------------------|---|
| 9  | IRL  | In real life           | 1 |
| 10 | Uni  | university             | 1 |
| 11 | Prob | Probably               | 1 |
| 12 | Cor  | Correct                | 4 |
| 13 | etc  | Et cetera              | 1 |
| 14 | ATM  | At that moment         | 2 |
| 15 | TBF  | To Be Fair             | 2 |
| 16 | PMSL | Pissed myself laughing | 2 |

Table: Abbreviations

The abbreviation of this data also comes from slang language such as *dunno* from the word *don't know* (Datum 2 #193, #202), and *cos* from the word *because* (Datum 2 #14, #88, #15, #18, 388). Another form of abbreviation, based on Danet (2001) is rebus writing. Here, the writer only found some examples of rebus writing on this data, such as *m8* from the word *mate* (Datum 1 #18), *r* from the word *are* (Datum 2 #32), and *u* from the word *you* (Datum 2 #244). Above all, the researcher concludes that all of abbreviations on this research is categorized as conventional abbreviation. There is no unconventional abbreviation that is not agreed and accepted with *The Student Room's* member.

## 9. All lower case

The last linguistic feature is about the use of all lower case on writing. In line with this research, there is two examples of the use all lower case in this data that represented them. The following example:



Ilovemaths96 : #4 i underachieved, does anyone know the process of retaking exams? what happens with myucas application, who writes my reference and gives me predicted grades? what happens with isas? caniresit my exams at the school i went to as a private candidate?

Anonymous :#4 why dont they limit the numbers of pharmacy too? theres too many pharmacists and a lot of people cant get jobs. Its not like a history degree which you can go into anything Datum 7

People commonly used Sentence case in their writing. Yet, based on the examples above, Ilovemaths96 and Anonymous write their post in lower case. It is a common thing in a digital writing based on Brenda Danet. She argues that writing in lower case has the benefit; it saves time and effort not to have to capitalize the first word of sentences, proper names, etc. (2001:18). Moreover, Bosco (2007) states that the reason for typing the messages entirely in either upper case or lower case letters is saving time and effort. It means that chatting in CMC using all lower case is more efficient in the terms of time.

#### **4.1.2 The Gender Differences in the Use of Linguistic Features**

After analyzing the linguistic features that exist on data, the researcher moves to examine the gender difference in using it.

##### **1. Multiple Punctuation**

In using multiple punctuations, both male and female are used this linguistic feature. However, after coding the whole data, the researcher found that there is no significant difference between male and female. Both of them are equally used it in the same amount. In addition, there is particular punctuation that commonly used by particular gender, such as asterisk that dominantly used by

male. They are often used this kind of punctuation because they also often write impolite sentence.

## **2. Eccentric Spelling**

As the previous linguistic feature, multiple punctuations, this eccentric spelling is dominated by female. They tend to use this feature, such as the word *so* that basically positioned as intensifiers become *sooooo* in written language. Here, the reduplication of particular letter is aimed to make the statement to be more powerful, especially for the adjective after this word. Moreover, this also happened in the part of typos in eccentric spelling. This linguistic feature usually happened because the writer types the post in fast and often with no concern regarding spelling. However, this linguistic feature is dominated by female.

## **3. Capital Letters**

The function of capital letter is to emphasize the particular word, phrase, or sentence. In this sense, the form is dominated by male. This capital letter indicates the speaker's politeness because it indicates the shouting.

## **4. Written out Laughter**

In this part, the researcher found the difference in the use of laughter, between male and female. These examples as follows:

TheAdventuresOf : Well, you must have had it easy. Whenever I try to convince my family that I would like to go on to do particle physics or astrophysics at university they tell me that I am going to do medicine because they want

me to and put an abrupt end to the conversation.  
Sorry for the rant. #47

Shahbaz : Just do it. No point doing something you dont like for the rest of your life. Theres too many asian doctors its not even special anymore. What I did was I didn't even tell them and just put down **TPhyscis** they soon accepted that decision. Then it wasn't even a big deal.  
#58

Freier.\_.lance :Very good choice 😊. Even if you don't go into academia your parents will still change their minds when they realise the high salaries you get from doing TPhysics. #64

Shahbaz : Yeah if you sell your soul to the banker haha. #66

Freier.\_.lance : Just remember to buy it back with the millions you make.

Based on the example above, there is a chat excerpt taken from Datum 7. They are talking about their choice of the study. Moreover, the example of written out laughter that exist on data is the word *haha* which spoken by Shahbaz. This word is commonly used to express the joke. However, in the example above, other TSR member's does not replies the joke because the post expressed as sign of sarcasm.

Another example of written out laughter also found in Datum 4.

JaegonTargaryen : Same here, I can sympathise with your current predicament.  
My personal solution to this long term dilemma is to use my mother for her assets while I secure my future in all means of the word , once I am in a stable financial position I will burn the bridge so to speak , and lose this non profitable asset. #14

Abdul-Karim : Indeed, I second this solution. Especially once you factor in the long-term commitment of both time and effort in maintaining a relationship which is unlikely to increase your capital. It makes very little objective self-serving sense to hold on to liabilities. In fact you can even leverage

your desire to succeed (so to speak) to make the process a lot less emotionally defeating. #15

Arrow900 : WTF have I just read.  
 "Cutting off ties..."  
 " burning bridges..."  
 You guys seriously have lost it. You sound obsessed with money. I mean what kind of human being refers to their mother as a "non profitable asset".  
 At first I honestly believed this was just banter but you guys sound serious. I have always considered pursuing a job in finance and I understand the cutthroat nature of such a career but you guys really have taken it a step too far.  
 You may think you are intelligent. You may even be intelligent. But you don't sound very wise.  
 This industry is going to chew you up and spit you out. No matter who you are. And once you are out, you are going to need something to return to. You can go ahead and "burn your bridges" but ultimately you will return to those bridges and you WILL want to cross it. Its up to you whether or not you are able to do so when the time comes. #21

AlexTorres : That's a horrendous thing to say #26

JaegonTargaryen: your sense of humor is horrendous if you thought we were being serious  #30

GreenOut : No, your sense of humour is horrendous if you thought that comes across as a joke. You must not be aware of what a joke actually is. #31

JaegonTargaryen: It wasn't a joke , it was sarcasm and hyperbole. #32

GreenOut : A pathetic attempt. #33

JaegonTargaryen:Seemed to rustle alot of jimmies on the thread so it seems successful to me.

umad

Im stopping posting off topic now

Im lolling at replies so bad hahaha #34

In line with this research, the researcher finds that female are more often to use it than male. Therefore, the meaning of this linguistic feature is different. It was supported by the context of the sentence. However, when a woman uses it means

that she wants to joke. Otherwise, when a man uses it, most of them are expressed as sign of sarcasm.

## **5. Description of Action**

On this section, the researcher could not compare the gender difference in using this linguistic feature because there is only one thread containing the example of description of action. This example is the existence of the word \*beep\*beep\* on 58<sup>th</sup> conversation in Datum 3. In addition, this example is used by female. Since the example of the use description of action on this research is comes one, the writer could not conclude the influence of gender on the usage.

## **6. Emoticons**

Emoticon is a sign of facial expression that represents the feeling condition of someone. Most of researchers mention it as a smiley such as 😊, ☹. On this data, the researcher found that gender difference has no significant difference in the use of emoticons. Between male and female are often use it in almost every post. However, the difference is on the variation of emoticon usage. Female use the emoticon more varies than male. Meanwhile, male just use the simple or particular emoticon, such as 😊, 🤔 and 🙄.

## **7. Abbreviations**

As the previous explanation, abbreviation has two forms. It could be acronym and rebus writing. The result of the research about abbreviation shows that male tends to use acronym in conversation. On the other hand, female are less

in using it. However, though both of them have difference about the amount of use it, the acronyms that they used are similar such as *lol*, *btw*, *fyi*, etc.

## 8. All Lower Case

The last feature that commonly used in digital writing is writing in all lower case. Here, the researcher found some examples in *The Student Room* that is used all lower case in their writing. Most of them are dominated by female.

### 4.2 Discussion

In the following discussion, the linguistic features and gender difference are presented in detail. It is followed by the discussion from the findings. In this part, the researcher is not present those two research questions including the linguistic features and gender difference in a separate part. The researcher united it to avoid repeating the word or sentence that basically has the same meaning.

#### 1. Multiple Punctuation

In the part of multiple punctuations, the researcher found four types of punctuation marks that exist on data, including multiple asterisk, full stop, exclamation, and question marks. From these punctuations, the researcher most often found the full stops.

#### 2. Eccentric Spelling

In the part of eccentric spelling, the researcher got some examples. One of the examples is taken from Datum 2 that discussing about the salary. "If someone

could just give me a job, that'd be greeeeat". The word *greeeeat* is derived from the word great. Another eccentric spelling found by the researcher is the use of the words *soooo*, *wayyyyy*, *miiiight*, *allll*, and *wat*. On the previous part, the researcher explained that the writing or communicating using CMC used informal way. Though it is informal, the spelling errors and other language inaccuracy are perceived as an acceptable norm in online communication (Stapa, Shaari, 2012). In addition, for several words which is typed in typography writing such as the word *jus*, *wat*, *thanks*, is intelligible and comprehensible although it violates the

Rule of Standard English spelling. It also helps writers to write their messages faster. Meanwhile, Squires (2005) mentioned that Labov (2001) states that female are more likely to use standard forms. They are overtly prestigious. In addition, Nemati and Bayer (2007) also mentioned that female tend to use the standard language more than male do. However, the result of this study is different with those previous researchers. This study explained that female in chat room are more likely used eccentric spelling on their writing.

### **3. Capital Letters**

In the level of capital letter, the finding of this research reveals that it must be exist on every thread. The Student Room's member used it in vary. Some of them applied on the whole of sentence. On the other hand, there is also the use of capital letter on a sentence. The aim of this capital letter is to give the pressure of the sentence in order to make the reader focus on that word/s. However, the member of TSR is more often to use the capital letter in word than in sentence.

#### 4. Written out Laughter

The researcher also found the example of written out laughter on the data. It is proven by the use of the word *hahaha* in the sentence. Some of the example used it to joke. In the other hand, there is also another chat mentioned it as an irony. However, most of them are dominated by the sense of joke.

#### 5. Description of Action

In this part, the researcher only found one example. It is shown in Datum 4 on the word “\*beep\*beep”. Actually, there is also a post containing description of action but there is no asterisk sign as explained by Brenda Danet.

#### 6. Emoticons

It is the further part that must be found on the data. However, the researcher found two types of the emoticon, graphic and non-graphic (keyboard writing). In the sense of graphic emoticon, the researcher found two types of emoticon; graphic and non-graphic.

Moreover, female tend to use emoticons (Witmer and Katzman, 1997), Wolf (2000). As the researcher explained before, the researcher found that male and female are equal in using emoticons. Though they are equal in using emoticons, the research provides that female uses more varied emoticon. It has provided by the existence of several active emoticon such as 🤔, 🤗, 🤖, etc. In addition, sometimes the existences of them are not too important and do not functioned in the same manner as the function. It is just a weakening tool in



conversation. In line with the result of this research, as cited on Stapa & Shaari (2012), Zaini Amir, Hazirah Abidin, Saadiyah Darus, Kemboja Ismail, 2012, p.120 explained that female also have a tendency of using language as well as a way to “soften an utterance”.

Moreover, the result of this research concerning with emoticon is refers to the previous studies about the comparison of male and female in using emoticon by Walther & D'Addario (2001), as cited in Huls (1993). They mentioned that the male and female subjects in their experiment were equally experienced in the use of emoticons.

## **7. Abbreviations**

Therefore, the researcher also several forms of abbreviation. It can be formed by acronyms and rebus writing. From these two abbreviation's type, the form that easily can be understood by the reader is the acronym form. However, most of them are derived from the laughter acronyms, such as *lol*, *rotfl*, *lmao*, etc.

## **8. All Lower Case.**

The last feature is all lower case. It is a written way where the user avoids using the capitalization. Although the object of this research categorized as CMC, the researcher found not all of the chats used this way. Many of them are prefer to use the Sentence case on their writing.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter explains the conclusion of the research. The researcher also provides some suggestions for future researcher who is interested to conduct a research in the field of sociolinguistics.

#### 5.1 Conclusion

Based on the preceded research questions, the objectives of this research are to know the linguistic features used in chat room. After examine the linguistic features that commonly used in digital writing based on Danet (2001) encompasses multiple punctuation, eccentric spelling, capital letters, asterisk to emphasis, written out laughter, description of action, emotions, abbreviations, and all lower case. Fortunately, the researcher only found 8 from 9 linguistic features that used in this chat room. However, there is no the use of asterisk to emphasis the statement in this data. Otherwise, the member of this online forum uses another way to express it using the capital letter. In addition, from those nine features above, the researcher concludes that the feature that most dominantly used in online discussion is emoticon. Almost every post on the data used this feature.

The second research question in this research is to know the effect of gender difference in using those linguistic features. As the previous explanation,

this research is not addressed for the difference of language style used by each gender, but it focuses to compare the linguistic feature based on Brenda Danet's perspective. The result of this research is some of linguistic features including capital letter, and abbreviations are dominated by male. They used those linguistic features in various form. In the other hand, some of linguistic features comprise eccentric spelling, written out laughter, and all lower case is dominated by female.

For the multiple punctuation and emoticon features, the researcher concludes that it is equally used by male and female. In addition, since the sample of data taken from western people, the emoticon displayed in graphically. It is only a few parts of them using emoticon from keyboard character.

Nevertheless, other features such as description of action could not be concluded by the researcher. It happens because the researcher only finds one example that categorized describing the speaker's action. Also, the researcher cannot conclude the research on the use of asterisk for emphasis because the researcher does not found it on the data.

## **5. 2 Suggestions**

After presenting and concluding the analysis of the research, the writer conveys the suggestion toward the future researcher. The research using CMC has particular difficulties. As explained in Chapter III, it is not easy to find the sex identity of the *netizen*. Hence, if the next researcher cannot find the sex identity of the user in a data, they can utilize the availability of the account's profile.

Therefore, if there is no the sex identity on that profile, the next researcher can pay attention on the tendency of the language that user used in data.

Next, the researcher hopes that the next research can be more complex than this research. It can compare two chat rooms dominated by particular gender, such as AskMen.com that dominated by male and WomenHealth.com that dominated by female.

As mentioned in Chapter I, the previous researcher of this study (related to the language and gender) only focuses on speech conversation. Whereas, there are many areas that do not used by the researcher in written conversation, using computer mediated communication (CMC) such as email, IRC, skype, and etc. However, this example is easier to analyze because it is personal relationship.

In the term of references, the researcher aware that there is a few researchers use the theory of linguistic feature by Brenda Danet. Most of the previous studies used theory of female language feature by Robin Tolmakh Lakoff (1975). Here, the next researcher, especially those who want to focus on CMC (Speech conversation) can also applied this theory to analyze the language style used by male and female whether in the aspect of intensifier, response, hedge, and etc.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arrasvuori, J., & Olsson, T. (2009). A Model for Analyzing Online Communities. *International Journal of Business and Information*, 115-136.
- Beaufort, A. (1997). Operationalizing the Concept of Discourse Community: A Case Study of One Institutional Site of Composing. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 486-530.
- Bobas, G. (2001). Computer Mediated Communication Theories and Phenomena: Factors that influence collaboration over the internet. *3rd CARNet Users Conference*. Zagreb.
- Bosco, L. S. S. (2007). SMS Gener@tion: A Study on the Language of Text Messaging in Hong Kong. Unpublished Thesis. University of Hongkong
- Cho, Thomas. (2010). Linguistic Features of Electronic Mail in the Workplace: A Comparison with Memoranda. *Language@Internet*, 7, 1-8.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Quantitative Research*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Crystal, D. (2006). *Language and the Internet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cvjetkovic, S. (2010). Computer-Mediated Communication: A Study of Language Variation on Internet Chat. Unpublished Thesis. Gothenburg University
- Danet, B. (2001). *Cyberplay: communicating online*. New York: Berg.
- Danet, B., & Herring, S. C. (2007). *The Multilingual Internet: Language, Culture, and Communication Online*. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc.
- Derks, D., Bos, A. E., & Grumbkow, J. v. (2007). Emoticons and Social Interaction on the Internet: The Importance Of Social Context. *Computers in Human Behavior* 23, 842-849.
- Gordon, D. (2009). "She's American Now, I Don't Like That": Gendered Language Ideologies in a Laotian American Community. *Journal of Southeast Asian American Education & Advancement*.
- Granqvist, K. P. (2013). *Hedges, Boosters and Tag Questions in The Big Bang Theory: A Gender Perspective*. Goteborgs Universiteit.

- He, Ying. (2009). *An Analysis of Gender Differences in Minimal Responses in the conversations in the two TV-series Growing Pains and Boy Meets World*. Unpublished Thesis. Kristianstad University.
- Herring, S. C. (1996). *Computer-mediated communication : Linguistic, social, and cross-cultural perspectives*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Kadir, ., Z., Maros, M., & Hamid, B. A. (2012). *Linguistic Features in the Online Discussion Forums*. International Journal of Social Science and Humanity, 276-281.
- Kalman, Y. M., Gergle, D. (2014). Letter repetitions in computer-mediated communication: A unique link between spoken and online language. *Computers in Human Behavior*. 187-193
- .Killingsworth, M. J. (1992). *Discourse Communities, Local and Global*. Rhetoric review, 110-122.
- Laghos, A., & Zaphiris, P. (1993). Frameworks for Analyzing Computer-Mediated-Communication in e- learning.
- Ling, R. 2005. The socio-linguistics of SMS: An analysis of SMS use by a random sample of Norwegians, in *Mobile communications: Renegotiation of the socialsphere*, ed. Ling R. and Pedersen P., 335 – 349. London: Springer.
- Maltz, D., & R, B. (1982). A cultural approach male-female miscommunication. In G. (Ed), *Language and Social Identity* (pp. 196-216). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mei, Y. S. (2006). *The Gender Differences in Linguistic Features of Dyadic*. Hongkong: The Chinese University of Hongkong.
- Mugair, S. K. (1991). *The Comparative Study of Linguistic Form in the Speech of Men and Women in Oliver Twist*. مجلة كلية الاداب, 20-30.
- Nazaryan, A., & Gridchin, A. (2006). The Influence of Internet on Language and "Email Stress". *Facta Universitatis*, 23-27.
- Nemati, A., & Bayer, J. M. (2007). Gender Differences in the Use of Linguistic Forms in the Speech of Men and Women: A Comparative Study of Persian and English. Mysore.
- Newman, M. L., Groom, C. J., Handelman, L. D., & Pennebaker, J. W. (2008). Gender Differences in Language Use: An Analysis of 14,000 Text Samples. *Discourse Processes*, 211-236.
- Paltridge, B. (2006). *Discourse Analysis*. London: MPG Books Ltd.

- Permatasari. (2010). *Women Speech Pattern used by the Characters of Sexy and the City Movie*. Unpublished Thesis. Malang: UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
- Pogner, K.-H. (2005). Discourse Communities and Communities of Practice on the Social Context of Text and Knowledge Production. *EGOS Colloquium*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School.
- Simpson, J. (2003). *The Discourse of Computer-Mediated Communication: A study of an online community*.
- Squires, L.M. (2005). Whats The Use Of Apostrophes? Gender Difference And Linguistic Variation In Instant Messaging . Presented To Internet Research 6.0: Generations, Oct 5-9, 2005
- Straus, J. (2008). *The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation. An Easy-to-use Guide with Clear Rules, Real-World Examples, and Reproducible Quizzes. Tenth Edition*. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass
- Wardhaugh, R. (2006). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Watts, L.A, Nugroho, Y., Lea, M. (2003). Engaging in E-mail Discussion: Conversational Context and Social Identity in Computer Mediated Communication. *Human-Computer Interaction*, 559-566.
- Wolf, A. (2000). Emotional Expression Online: Gender Differences in Emoticon Use. *Cyberpsychology and Behavior*, 827-833.
- Wood, A. F., & Smith, M. J. (2005). *Online Communication: Linking Technology, Identity, and Culture*. New Jersey, London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Yus, F. (2011). *Cyberpragmatics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co.
- Yus, F. (2011). *Cyberpragmatics: Internet-mediated communication in context*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.