

Gender and Extramural English

A Study Investigating Gender-Related Linguistic Features of Hedges, Minimal Responses, and Interruptions in the Possible Extramural English Activity of Watching a Reality TV-Show

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Abstract

The present study aims to examine the linguistic features of hedges, minimal responses and interruptions used by the female and male participants in the possible extramural activity of the reality-TV show *Love is Blind*. The term Extramural English (EE) refers to English that students are exposed to outside the classroom. According to previous research, Swedish teenagers watch a considerable amount of TV, which is a potential EE activity. By possible exposure to EE activities, such as watching TV, learners might gain pragmatic competence that might result in them improving their communicative abilities in the English language. Furthermore, the Swedish school openly strives for gender equality and, therefore, this study investigates the gender characteristics of linguistic features that are categorized as often employed by either females or males. The methodology of the study includes transcribing, counting the linguistic features, color coding and analyzing the findings in relation to previous research. Regarding speech distribution, results show that the male participants speak 5.1 percentage units more than female participants. Furthermore, female participants use hedges 33.4 percentage units more often than the male participants and minimal responses 24 percentage units more often. Additionally, the male participants interrupt 25 percentage units more often than the female participants.

Keywords: Extramural English (EE), Gender, Pragmatics, Hedges, Minimal Responses, Interruptions

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1. Introduction

Today, the English language is widely used all around the world and it surrounds us constantly. It is present in our everyday life, through social media, commercials, interactions, and TV. When it comes to the educational setting, the English that learners are not exposed to in the classroom, but instead are exposed to outside the classroom is called Extramural English (EE).

According to Sundqvist & Sylvén (2016) the development of Global English and the digital age led to the transformation in L2 English classrooms. In the past, “classrooms were more or less homogeneous in the sense that most learners had similar access to English input and also similar opportunities for English interaction and output” (Sundqvist & Sylvén 2016, p. 31). Additionally, the instructor had control over how much English the students were exposed to, and in most circumstances, the teacher served as the students' primary English role model, frequently the only one available. When differences in the English classroom occurred, this derived from individual differences in, for instance, language learning predisposition and cognitive ability, which instructors and teachers pedagogically were trained to handle. However, Sundqvist & Sylvén (2016) argue that the differences found in the 2010s L2 English classrooms derive “from learners’ varying experiences of involvement in EE activities. It has to do with the amount of time spent on EE, and what types of EE activities learners are engaged in” (Sundqvist & Sylvén 2016, p. 32). This is something to take in consideration in the L2 classroom since the learners already might have knowledge about the English language through EE activity.

TV is one avenue where learners might be exposed to EE. In Sweden, the Media Barometer 2021 (Nordicom, University of Gothenburg) review Swedes media habits, showing statistics that 97 % of people ages 9–14 years and 94% of people ages 15–24 years watch all types of moving content, such as television, streaming television/video-on-demand, downloaded movies, DVDs, and video clips. Further, streaming amounts to 78 % of all TV consumption ages 9–14 and 71% ages 15–24. This shows that teenagers in Sweden consume a noteworthy amount of TV and therefore possibly are exposed to English outside the classroom environment. This considerable amount of TV-watching and exposure to EE is the basis of investigating the language used in EE activity of TV.

The TV-show selected for my corpus is the reality TV-show *Love is Blind*, season 3, episode 5. The choice to use reality-TV stems from Hill (2009, p. 2, 5) stating that especially, younger adults are drawn to the reality genre. Furthermore, the reality-TV genre features ordinary people utilizing semi-authentic speech. Meaning that the participants are ordinary people using their

authentic speech, however, it is a TV-production, so directives and some scripted parts may occur.

This study aims to investigate the linguistic features of hedges, minimal responses and interruptions found in the English language and how they are utilized by the female and male gender. According to Talbot (2020) in all societies, gender is a significant dividing line. It has profound effects on a person whether they are born male or female and it influences both how we behave in society and how others treat and view us. This is present and recognized in the way we use language and applies to “the language we use, and the language used about us” (Talbot 2020, p. 19).

Furthermore, Lakoff (2000, p. 20) states that we construct and analyze what we refer to as "reality" using language. Language is the tool we use to create “reality”, and this can be different depending on gender. For instance, the deficit theory claims that there are differences in how men and women use language and that these differences are characterized by which linguistic features are used by each gender. Coates (2004) explains that according to the deficit theory women’s language (WL) is deficient and lacking compared to men’s language. Lakoff claims that these “linguistic imbalances are worthy of study because they bring into sharper focus real-world imbalances and inequities” (Lakoff 1975, p. 43). This is of special importance for second language teachers, according to Lakoff, stating that “it is important to realize that social context is relevant in learning to speak a second language fluently” (Lakoff 1975, p. 47). Moreover, the type of language that a teacher uses must also be considered; for example, “if a woman teacher unconsciously teaches “women’s language” to her male students, they may be in difficulties when they try to function in another country” (Lakoff 1975, p. 47).

Additionally, not only can we learn about gender inequality in language through linguistic features but also through pragmatics. According to Yule (2020) pragmatics is “the study of speaker meaning and how more is communicated than is said” (Yule 2020, p. 340). When acquiring a second language, pragmatics therefore might be difficult to grasp since it is not the explicit utterances that need to be interpreted but the meaning behind the utterances. Furthermore, Hedge (2000, p. 46) states that pragmatic competence is one of the key components in the concept of communicative language ability. Thus, pragmatics deals with communication as well as the hidden meaning of what is being communicated. Furthermore, Barron, Gu & Steen (2017) highlight that gender roles are performed. These might be performed through the hidden messages of pragmatics. Consequently, learners exposed to EE in TV-shows might gain pragmatic competence and therefore might improve their communicative skills in the English language, being more aware of the gender roles performed in the EE activity.

Additionally, it is “the study of the relationship between linguistic forms and the users of those forms” (Yule 1996, p. 4). So, pragmatics entail the elements of linguistic form and how we use those forms. For this study the linguistic forms being investigated are hedges, minimal responses, and interruptions. Furthermore, the study will examine the frequency of these linguistic features and how they are used by the participants in the TV-show *Love is Blind*.

Moreover, an additional reason for investigating linguistic features in relation to gender is that gender equality is promoted in the curriculum for upper secondary school in Sweden. Skolverket (2022, p. 1) promotes equality within the Swedish school system, stating that equality between women and men and solidarity between people are the values that education must embody and convey and that it is imperative to actively oppose tendencies toward discrimination or abusive treatment.

This study aims to shed some light on some linguistic features described as representative for the female and male gender. The results will hopefully provide an insight into the linguistic features found in the EE activity of reality-TV. Furthermore, the result of this study aims to help teachers to become aware of the linguistic features learners are exposed to outside the classroom environment which might help navigate in the pedagogical setting.

1.1 Aim and research questions

The aim for this essay is to examine how gender differences are reflected in the use of linguistic features of *hedges*, *minimal responses* and *interruptions* in the reality TV-show *Love is Blind*, Season 3, Episode 5. Given the previous research and given the postmodern aspect within pragmatics, which will be presented in the next section, this study will look at the aspects not only regarding differences between male and female language features based on gender, but also how the features are utilized or performed within the different gender groups. Consequently, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What is the distribution and frequency of the linguistic features *hedges*, *minimal responses*, and *interruptions* between the female and male participants in *Love is Blind*?
- 2) What is the distribution and frequency of the linguistic features *hedges*, *minimal responses*, and *interruptions* among the female participants in *Love is Blind*?
- 3) What is the distribution and frequency of the linguistic features *hedges*, *minimal responses*, and *interruptions* among the male participants in *Love is Blind*?
- 4) Are there any differences in the female and male participants' usage of *hedges*, *minimal responses*, and *interruptions*? How do the separate group utilize the linguistic features within their groups? Do they use the linguistic features differently?

2. Previous Research

2.1 Deficit Theory

The deficit theory seeks to establish that men and women utilize language differently. It makes the case that the language used by men is the norm and, thus, superior. Talbot (2010) explains the deficit theory as a framework where “women are disadvantaged as language users. They present themselves as uncertain, as lacking in authority...The language men use is, by implication, the norm and that women don't match up to” (Talbot 2010, p. 98).

According to Coates (2004) the initial work in the field regarding gender and language is Robin Lakoff's contribution: “Language and Woman's place”. Lakoff asserts the existence of a "women's language" (WL), which is characterized “by linguistic forms such as hedges, 'empty' adjectives like *charming*, *divine*, and *nice*” (Coates 2004, p. 6). Litosseliti (2006) states that Lakoff argues that there “are fundamental claims about women's language as lacking, weak, trivial, and hesitant – in short, deficient when compared to men's language” (Litosseliti 2006, p. 28). The argument is that WL becomes deficient and lacking in comparison to the norm of the male language where WL is regarded as being deficient or weak. Litosseliti (2006) claims that, according to Lakoff, many characteristics of women's speech are indicative of this weakness and that women use intonation patterns to show hesitation and win their listener's acceptance.

Simpson (2011, p. 333) also comments on Lakoff's work and the deficit theory bringing up the argument that Lakoff suggests that girls are socialized to speak in a manner that is more "ladylike" and are taught how to speak a different "woman's language" from a young age. The majority of this ladylike language, according to Lakoff, is exhibited by a variety of modifiers (such as hedges and tag questions), which in her opinion dilute the content and reveal a weak, powerless and insecure speaker. Another argument Lakoff (1975) makes is that “allowing men stronger means of expression than are open to women further reinforces men's position of strength in the real world” (Lakoff 1975, p. 11). According to Lakoff (1975, p. 7), the result of these differences is that women are systematically excluded from positions of authority on the basis of their linguistic behavior, as well as their body language.

2.2 Dominance Theory

According to Simpson (2011) apparent difference between male and female linguistic preferences were revealed through the dominance theory. The theory had two separate and overlapping branches: language as a social interaction and language as a system. Language as a social interaction “considered how gender inequalities were constructed through routine

interactions between men and women” (Simpson 2011, p. 333). Furthermore, dominance theorist believed that everyday conversations played a significant role in the development of uneven gender relations. When it comes to language as a system, the focus was on sexism found imbedded and enclosed in the language. Simpson (2011) explains that “Spender (1980) argued that language has evolved over the centuries to serve male needs, to represent male interests, and to express male experiences: in short, it is ‘man-made’” (2011, p. 334).

Coates (2004) also gives an account for the dominance theory or dominance approach, describing the theory as the one seeing women as a marginalized group and that the linguistic disparities between men and women reflect men's dominance and women's subordination. Researchers interested in demonstrating how male dominance is enacted through linguistic practice use the dominance theory. Furthermore, “‘doing power’ is often a way of ‘doing gender’ too (see West and Zimmerman 1983). Moreover, all participants in discourse, women as well as men, collude in sustaining and perpetuating male dominance and female oppression” (Coates 2004, p. 6).

Both the deficit theory and the dominance theory stress the subordination of female language and the dominance of the male. These theories will be used in the analysis of the linguistic features this study sets out to investigate. If we construct gender through language, and specifically through these different linguistic features, this is something that learners might be exposed to during an EE activity, which might lead them to conform to these linguistic behaviors and patterns in their authentic language use.

2.3 Pragmatics

Yule (2020) states that pragmatics is “the study of speaker meaning and how more is communicated than is said” (Yule 2020, p. 340). Further, Yule (2020, p. 150) explains that pragmatics is the hidden meaning or how we understand what is meant and communicated even when it is not explicitly written or said. To understand the hidden meaning speakers or writers must be able to rely on a lot of common presumptions and expectations when they try to communicate with each other. Furthermore, it is the “the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader)” (Yule 1996, p. 3). Therefore, pragmatically speaking, more is always communicated than is expressed. According to Yule (1996) there is value in investigating pragmatics and it “is appealing because it’s about how people make sense of each other linguistically” (Yule 1996, p. 4). This is a reason why this study has chosen to investigate the linguistic features of hedges, minimal responses and interruptions, because it might give an insight on how the participants utilize and make sense

of them through their interactions. Since pragmatics is concerned with the meaning behind what is being said there are several areas within the area of pragmatics. Following I will focus on two aspects within the field that are of relevance for this study: interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) and communicative language ability.

According to Barron, Gu & Steen (2017, p. 153) interlanguage pragmatics is an area of second language acquisition (SLA) that studies second language (L2) learners' use, understanding, knowledge, and development in carrying out sociocultural functions. Claiming that “L2 learners need linguistic forms and skills to perform everyday social functions in the target language” (Barron, Gu & Steen 2017, p. 153). To do so learners must be aware of which forms to employ in different contexts since our speech patterns depend on the context, whom we are speaking to and under what conditions. According to Yule (1996) interlanguage pragmatics “focuses more specifically on the communicative behavior of non-native speakers, attempting to communicate in their second language” (Yule 1996, p. 88). Consequently, when one is acquiring a language and communicating in the target language communication is key.

Hedge (2000) introduces the concept of communicative language ability and defining communicative language ability as “knowledge of language form and the ability to put that knowledge to use in communication” (Hedge 2000, p. 407). Furthermore, Hedge (2000, p. 46) states that communicative language ability consists of different key components. The components are: “*linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, and fluency*” (Hedge 2000, p. 46). Thus, these different parts become essential in language learning since they help us to communicate more effectively.

Hedge’s (2000) definition of pragmatics is that it is “the study of the real use of language in relation to context, language user, and topic” (Hedge 2000, p. 411). This is reflected in the components within communicative language ability. The relationship to context can be found in the component of discourse competence which is “the ability to understand and produce contextualized stretches of language in spoken or written texts” (Hedge 2000, p. 408). When it comes to the language user as well as the topic, we can see it corresponding to the components of linguistic competence, which is “a knowledge of spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary, word formation, grammatical structure, sentence structure, and meaning” (Hedge 2000, p. 410). Furthermore, it corresponds to strategic competence which is described as “knowing how to use different kinds of strategies, for example miming, to express something when language resources are lacking” (Hedge 2000, p. 412) as well as fluency, which is “the ability to link units of speech together with ease” (Hedge 2000, p. 409).

When it comes to the component of pragmatics competence it entails “knowing how to express an intention clearly and in a way which is appropriate both to the person to whom it is expressed and the setting in which it is expressed” (Hedge 2000, p. 411). This involves many aspects of language, it requires knowledge of context, person and being able to understand the hidden meaning in what is being said in that particular situation and context. Furthermore, it requires the ability to communicate the message through written or spoken words which require grammatical and linguistic knowledge.

Additionally, worth mentioning here is communicative competence which is “knowledge of language rules, and how these rules are used to understand and produce appropriate language in a variety of sociocultural settings (Hedge 2000, p. 407). Therefore, to be able to communicate in an efficient way learners must have the linguistic knowledge as well as contextual and social knowledge and understanding of knowing when to use those linguistic and grammatical rules appropriately.

Finally, Hedge (2000, p. 46) states that the study of the communicative language ability became more and more relevant in connection to the field of English teaching, focusing on teaching students how to communicate effectively with people from different societies. Since communicative skills are relevant for learning a language, the component of both linguistic competence and pragmatics competence are an integral part of language learning. Through possible exposure to the EE activity of watching a reality TV-show, students outside the classroom might be exposed to both the linguistic features investigated in this study and the pragmatics of that TV-show. This could result in learners being able to improve their communicative language ability through EE activity.

Worth mentioning here is also the concept of social constructionism. According to Brinkkjaer & Høyen (2020) “the fundamental assumption of social constructivism is that man constructs the world and that this construction to a certain extent is temporary” (Brinkkjaer & Høyen 2020, p. 180). It is about constructing the reality in which we operate and “through social constructivism, we can explore how people construct their understanding of themselves based on the social environment” (Brinkkjaer & Høyen 2020, p. 180).

Burr (1995, p. 3) states that one part of social constructivism takes place in our social life and that our versions of knowledge are constructed through everyday interactions between people in the social context. Consequently, “social interaction of all kinds, and particularly language, is of great interest to social constructionists” (Burr 1995, p. 3).

2.3.1 Pragmatics and Gender

Leech (1983) argues “that we cannot really understand the nature of language itself unless we understand pragmatics: how language is used in communication” (Leech 1983, p. 2). Consequently, to understand a language, one must understand how language is utilized in communication and one must comprehend pragmatics.

Furthermore, Barron, Gu & Steen (2017) highlight that the postmodern view of gender roles, states that “gender is performed (i.e. it is something we do) rather than an expression of what we are; it is not a fact but an act (Nelson 1999)” (Barron, Gu & Steen 2017, p. 123). As a result, gender is never completely done, and gender performances are seen as fluctuating and context-dependent. The postmodern perspective on gender and how it is performed not only focuses on context in which genders are being performed but also pluralities within femininities and masculinities analyzing “which gender intersects with other social constructs such as class, race, and sexual identity to produce various types of masculinity and femininity” (Barron, Gu & Steen 2017, p. 123). Subsequently, instead of continuously emphasizing the distinctions between male and female, the focus is on how nuanced representations of gender and sexuality could affect the presumptions we bring with us when creating meaning in a conversation. This is relevant too since this study will not only investigate the differences between male and female linguistic features but also how they are represented within the gender.

Furthermore, Crawford (1997, p. 41) states that the impacts of gender become more apparent as the focus switches from the linguistic characteristics of individual speech to the dynamics of interaction where certain aspects of conversation between men and women develop into recognizable patterns. This is also something this study aims to investigate.

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learners this might result in a construction of gender that might have an effect on the way they adapt their view and construct their language in the English-speaking world.

2.4 Extramural English

The term Extramural English (EE) was coined in 2009 by Sundqvist and is a term that refers to the English outside the classroom setting. Sundqvist (2009) argues that EE does not entail any form of deliberate intent from the learner to acquire English “even though deliberate intention is by no means excluded from the concept” (Sundqvist 2009, p. 25). What is imperative in EE is that the learner interacts with or participates in English outside of the English classroom. Furthermore, according to Sundqvist & Sylvén (2016) the term EE refers to the English that students engage in and encounter outside of the classroom. The contact with English is not “initiated by teachers or other people working in educational institutions; the initiative for contact/involvement lies with the learner himself/herself or, at times, with someone else, such as a friend or a parent. Thus, in general, contact/involvement is voluntary on the part of the learner” (Sundqvist & Sylvén 2016, p. 6).

Sundqvist & Sylvén (2016, p. 7) list typical EE activities such as, watching TV-series, films, video blogs, music videos, reading books, magazines, blogs, newspaper, listening to music, playing videogames games, surfing websites in English on the internet, following people, organizations, or news on social media. Moreover, they mention that “EE encompasses input, output, and/or interaction in English; that is, the essential components needed for second-language (L2) learning are in place” (Sundqvist & Sylvén 2016, p. 7).

2.4.1 Extramural English Matters

Pia Sundqvist has done a range of studies in EE between 2009 and now, to explore the role of EE and its impact on English language learners. One study conducted by Sundqvist in 2009 investigated the impact EE has on Swedish ninth graders’ vocabulary and oral proficiency. Sundqvist’s (2009) empirical data used for the study included language diaries, survey data, the national English test for ninth-grade students, recorded oral test speech, student interviews and evaluations of participants' oral skills by outside assessors. For the analysis, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used, but the quantitative component was prioritized.

Results showed that the overall amount of time ninth graders devote to EE have a positive outcome. The positive outcome correlates both with their oral proficiency and their vocabulary. Further, Sundqvist (2009, p. 212) concludes that even the modest increases in time can make a significant difference for students who typically spend little time on EE in terms of their oral abilities. Additionally, EE activities that compel students to be productive and active are more

crucial for vocabulary development and oral skills than activities where the student can be more passive. The study further concludes that “boys spend significantly more time on active/productive EE activities compared to what girls do” (Sundqvist 2009, p. 212). Consequently, boys’ speaking abilities and vocabulary are more impacted by EE than those of girls. The presented research shows that moderate increase in time spent involved in an EE activity can have positive consequences for learners’ oral abilities and that an EE activity includes the crucial elements required for second-language (L2) learning.

2.5 Media and Reality TV

The media have created amplified opportunity for young people to be exposed to Extramural English. Sundqvist (2009) mentions the impact of English being dominant in Swedish media, giving the example that “on Swedish television, English-speaking programs and films are not dubbed but subtitled” (2009, p. 28). The reality-tv show selected for this study, is an example of what Sundqvist (2009) describes.

The Media Barometer 2021 (Nordicom, University of Gothenburg) is a survey of the media habits of the Swedish population. The category “moving image” (rörlig bild) refers to all types of moving content, including programmed television, web television, streaming television/video-on-demand, downloaded movies, DVDs, and video clips. The Media Barometer 2021 (p.38, Nordicom, University of Gothenburg) shows statistics according to which 97 % of Swedes ages 9–14 and 94% of Swedes ages 15–24) watch moving image, where streaming amounts to 78 % of all TV consumption in the age group 9–14 years and 71% in the age group 15–24 years.

Further, Berns, de Bot, & Hasebrink (2007) claim that the function of media has grown to play a “formative role in society by informing, or at a deeper level, by forming, concepts, belief systems and verbal, visual, and symbolic languages that citizens use to make sense of the world and their place in it” (Berns, de Bot, & Hasebrink 2007, p. 11). This would mean that if teenagers are involved in a possible EE activity within the media scope, they are also likely to be exposed to concepts, belief systems and language that might be presented in for example an American TV-show showcasing the concepts, belief systems and language found in America. By doing so they might get an insight in how certain linguistic features are used in that context. This is an additionally reason why a TV-show has been selected for the corpus, as it exposes symbolic and verbal language that might create an understanding of the world.

Hill (2009) describes reality TV as an umbrella term for a variety of entertaining programs about actual people and borders between “information and entertainment, documentary and

drama” (Hill 2009, p. 2). Furthermore, Hill (2009, p. 2, 5) states that specifically, younger adults are drawn to the reality genre, which is one of the reasons it has been so successful in the television industry. The viewers of reality TV are not only watching entertainment programs but are “also engaged in critical viewing of the attitudes and behavior of ordinary people in the programmes, and the ideas and practices of the producers of the programmes” (Hill 2009, p. 9).

Additionally, the reason why a reality show has been selected for the analysis of this study, is that it targets a younger audience as well as it features ordinary people with somewhat authentic speech.

2.5.1 Learning L2 Vocabulary with American TV Drama *From the Learner’s Perspective*

Wang (2012, p.217) carried out a study to examine how the American TV-shows: “*How I met your mother*”, “*The King of Queens*”, and “*Reba*” was incorporated into L2 vocabulary learning from the viewpoints of the learners. The twenty-eight Taiwanese EFL adult learners who took part in the study, participated in classroom activities such as watching video clips, word listing, and classroom discussions. Additionally, students completed a questionnaire and were individually interviewed by the researcher to give their opinions.

Wang (2012, p. 217, 224) presents results that show positive remarks on the facilitative function of TV in acquiring new vocabulary. From the viewpoint of the learners, viewing American TV does aid in their acquisition of the target vocabulary, particularly when the terms are used repeatedly, dramatically, or with unexpected meanings. Furthermore, the study's results are consistent with the cognitive load theory, which holds that images and sounds can shorten learning time by bridging the gap between concepts that appear to be unrelated and by saving room in students' limited working memory.

Wang (2012, p. 223) states that the learners in the study, not only agreed with the benefits of using American TV to encourage the acquisition of L2 vocabulary, but they also provided examples of the learning process. For instance, they discovered that videos had pictures that made it simple for them to remember words. Furthermore, the learners claimed that the themes, incidents, and characters' feelings all assisted them in learning the target words. Repetition also helped to improve their memory. For example, some of the terms caught learners’ attention since they appeared multiple times in the video and the learners became familiar with the definition and usage of the target words after seeing and hearing them a few times.

2.5.2 Pedagogical implications of using English TV series as supplement for EFL learners

Ching & Tchong (2015, p. 45, 51) conducted a study with six EFL students at a university in Taiwan. The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of watching the English TV-show *Modern Family*, with or without English subtitles and what impact it had on EFL students' comprehension of the English language. Ching & Tchong's (2015, p. 59) results show that students overall demonstrated improvement in all the primary areas of the study. For example, the use of dictionaries decreased as the quality of the translated content increased.

Ching & Tchong's (2015) moreover present previous research showing results that "subtitles are able to help EFL students learn new vocabulary, practice their listening skills, and increase their comprehension and understanding of film contents" (Ching & Tchong 2015, p.49). Moreover, Ching & Tchong (2015) further claim that when EFL students watch films with subtitles, it appears as if they gradually pick up the language. Stating that not only do they learn how specific vocabular is used in different situations but additionally they are able to confirm the spelling of the words and terms used in the film. Furthermore, stating that "using films in teaching does not only attract students' interests, but also let students'[sic] acquire more knowledge and insight towards a foreign culture" (Ching & Tchong 2015, p. 59). Finally, Ching & Tchong (2015) conclude that to help EFL students learn and develop a new skill firsthand, such a form of learning activity is highly recommended.

The research presented above shows that by using English subtitles when watching the English TV-show *Modern Family*, learners are able to practice their listening skills and expand their vocabulary. Furthermore, learners can gain knowledge about when specific vocabulary can be used, increasingly pick up the language and use the dictionary less. This becomes important to this specific study since this study will investigate specific linguistic features that learners might be exposed to. Consequently, linguistic features that might become part of their comprehension of their knowledge about the English language.

Moreover, if they gain knowledge about linguistic features and expand their vocabulary, they also might gain knowledge about how gender is being performed and constructed by these features which might expand their pragmatic competence and understanding of how gender is constructed.

3. Analyzed Linguistic Features

The following linguistic features that will be analyzed in this study are: *hedges*, *minimal responses*, and *interruptions*. The selected linguistic features are based on gender-related differences in language behavior presented by Coates (2004) who considers the “linguistic variation related to the gender of the speaker” (Coates 2004, p. 7).

3.1 Hedges

Coates (2004, p. 88) describe hedges as a linguistic feature used to convey the level of certainty or uncertainty from the speaker regarding a topic at hand. Examples of hedges are: *you know*, *sort of*, *like*, *I'm sure*, *I think*. Additionally, Yule (2020) defines hedge as “a word or phrase used to indicate that you are not really sure that what you are saying is sufficiently correct or complete” (Yule 2007, p. 336). Coates (2004, p. 88) explains that, according to Lakoff, the hedge use by women and a lack of assertiveness are directly related, asserting that women use more hedging words in their speech than men.

According to Talbot (2010, p. 37) hedges are "filler" words or phrases such as, *well*, *kind of*, *sort of* and *you know*, and these words has the impact to lessen what is being spoken. They are frequently used to give statements some hesitancy and make them seem less rigid or assertive. Sometimes, but not usually, they suggest uncertainty. As many others, Talbot (2010) also refers to Lakoff's work stating that “Lakoff maintains that women's use of these hedges arises out of seeming too masculine by being assertive and saying things directly” (Talbot 2010, p. 37).

According to Cambridge online dictionary, to soften what we say or write, we utilize hedges. The use of hedges is crucial in polite communication. They mute the directness of what we say. Furthermore, “the most common forms of hedging involve tense and aspect, modal expressions including modal verbs and adverbs, vague language such as *sort of* and *kind of*, and some verbs” (Cambridge).

3.2 Minimal responses

Fellegly (1995, p. 186) states that in American English, minimal responses are sounds such as *yeah*, *mmhmm*, *right* and *uh-huh* that are made by a listener to indicate their level of engagement with, and interest in, the speaker. According to Coates (2004) research examining the usage of minimal responses consistently demonstrates that women use them more frequently than males. This is done when appropriate, that is, when the listener is showing support for the speaker at the given moment. Additionally, “when men *do* use minimal responses, these are often delayed, a tactic which undermines the current speaker and reinforces male dominance” (Coates 2004, p. 87). Examples of minimal responses are: *righty*, *mhm* and *yeah*.

Minimal responses and backchanneling are linguistic features that bear close resemblance. Chahooshi & Rezvano state that for many researchers, the concept of back channeling has diverse connotations. According to “Cech and Condon’s (2004) view, the backchannel is named as a minimal response indicating the speaker’s engagement in speech while being passive in the conversation” (Chahooshi & Rezvano 2018, p. 35). This study holds the same assessment regarding backchanneling, viewing it as a minimal response.

3.3 Interruptions

Cambridge online dictionary defines interruption as “an occasion when someone or something stops something from happening for a short period” (Cambridge). Furthermore, Coates (2004, p. 113, 114) explains that interruptions disrupt the rules of the conversation. The conversational model is broken, and the speaker's turn is interrupted before it is finished, giving the interrupter the opportunity to speak. Interruptions take place while the previous speaker is still speaking, but before what could be considered the last word, the following speaker gets up to speak. Examples show “results indicate that in mixed-sex conversations men infringe women's right to speak, specifically women's right to finish a turn” (Coates 2004, p. 115).

According to Talbot (2010, p. 98), when viewed through the dominance framework, language patterns are seen as representations of patriarchal social structure. Therefore, discrepancies between how men and women use language are seen as manifestations of male privilege. This becomes apparent when it comes to interruptions, since “interruptions are viewed as ‘a way of “doing” power in face-to-face interaction (West and Zimmerman 1983:111)” (Talbot 2010, p. 98). Furthermore, Crawford (1997) describes patterns of interruptions as “asymmetrical and dependent on gender and status” (Crawford 1997, p. 41).

Interruptions are not to be confused with overlaps. Where interruptions interrupt the speaker and disrupts the last word, overlaps are used to overlap the last word of the speaker. Coates (2004) explains that overlaps happen when the next speaker gets slightly excited and “instead of beginning to speak immediately following the current speaker’s turn, the next speaker begins to speak at the very end of the current speaker’s turn, overlapping the last word (or part of it)” (Coates 2004, p. 113).

4. Methodology

This section will present the methodology used for this study. The study is both quantitative and qualitative. It is quantitative due to the researcher counting the number of times each

linguistic feature of hedge, minimal response or interruption is uttered. It is qualitative since it will examine the qualitative differences when using the linguistic features of hedges, minimal responses and interruptions.

4.1 The Corpus

The data for this analysis comes from the streaming site Netflix. The corpus that is analyzed is the TV-show *Love is Blind*, Season 3, Episode 5. *Love is blind* is an American dating reality TV-show. The show runs on the streaming platform Netflix. It is a social experiment where people participate to find their future spouse. The experiment is called *Love is Blind*, since the couples decide to get married based on who they connect with emotionally, getting engaged after conversations and without every seeing each other. The experiment ends with a wedding for each of the couples. After four weeks together, they have to say either yes or no on the wedding day. The experiment consists of four stages.

Stage 1: Participants date without seeing each other. This is done in what they call “pods”, where they are in two separate rooms and a wall separates them from seeing each other. Since there are only heterosexual couples presented in this experiment, the men are on one side of the wall and the women on the other. Once they have created an emotional connection to another person, they keep dating them without seeing them. After about ten days they get engaged, without seeing each other.

Stage 2: The couples see each other for the first time and spend a honeymoon together. This is done at the same vacation spot as the other four couples who have chosen to get engaged. These are also people that one might have been dating during the first stage.

Stage 3: The couples go home, move in together and meet family and friends. They prepare for the wedding, have bachelor and bachelorette party, and keep building on the emotional connection made in the pods.

Stage 4: The wedding. The couples decide to get married or not.

During the third season the show was listed on Netflix top 10 shows watched in Sweden. The first season aired in 2020 and has been created and adapted in both Brazil and Japan since. The couples participating in the show are: Zanab and Cole, Colleen and Matt, Alexa and Brennon, Nancy and Bartise, as well as Raven and SK. *Love is Blind*, season 3 consists of 12 episodes. The episode analyzed in this study is Episode 5, consisting of 7061 words.

4.2 Data Collection

The corpus for the analysis is one episode from *Love is Blind*, season 3. The selected episode 5 is titled “Trouble in Paradise”. The reason for choosing this specific episode is based on the

diversity of speech taking place in the episode. The episode entails both mixed and same-sex conversations because the couples get opportunity to interact with each other. This makes it possible to investigate if the linguistic features appear in both same-sex and mix-sex conversations. Furthermore, the choice of using a reality-TV show is based on two reasons. First, previous research states that reality-TV is a genre that attracts a young audience. Second, previous research tells us young people in Sweden view a substantial amount of TV. Together, these facts might suggest that reality-TV is viewed by young people who might be potential learners found in the EFL classroom. Additionally, the linguistic features that are selected for investigation are based on previous research stating that these are features differentiating female and male speech linguistically.

The aim with analyzing the transcripts is to investigate the frequency of use of *hedges*, *minimal responses*, and *interruptions* among the female and male participants of *Love is Blind*, season 3, episode 5. Further, the aim is to discover the distribution of the use of the linguistic features between the female and male participants. Furthermore, the purpose is to investigate if the male and female participants use the linguistic features differently. The analysis was done by the following steps.

Step 1: Selecting the data and deciding what data to use as corpus.

Step 2: Transcribing selected corpus.

Step 3: Tagging the speaker. The tagging was done manually since the corpus was not that large. Tagging was done using color coding. To identify the gender of the speaker women and men were tagged in the different colors. **Women** in green and **Men** in yellow.

Step 4: Tagging linguistic features. The tagging was done manually since the corpus was not that large. To identify the different linguistic features that were utilized they were tagged in different colors. **Hedge** in blue, **Minimal response** in pink and **Interruption** in grey.

Step 5: Deciding and tagging specific words for the linguistic features. Simpson (2011, p. 600) states that word lists can be helpful in comparing various corpora and are an excellent place to start for further searches of specific items. Word lists can be created to account for both single items as well as recurring patterns involving two or more items. This is something that has been done for this corpus. Furthermore, Simpson (2011), describes something called lemmatised

frequency lists which “group together words from the same lemma. For example, the words ‘say’, ‘said’, ‘saying’, ‘says’ are all part of the lemma SAY” (Simpson 2011, p. 600). This has been done with the word Mhm. The linguistic features that were selected to be analyzed and tagged in the corpus are listed in a wordlist below.

Hedge	Minimal response	Interruption
You know	Mhm / Mm / Mm-mm / Mm-hmm	Interrupting conversation
Like	Yeah	

Step 6: Sorting corpus according to each female participant. This was done by creating a document for each female participant and applying their transcribed words into respective document.

Step 7: Sorting corpus according to each male participant. This was done by creating a document for each male participant and applying their transcribed words into respective document.

Step 8: Determining the total word count. First, counting the total word count for the whole corpus. Second, counting the total word count for the female participants. Third, counting the total word count for the male participants. Fourth, counting the total word count for each individual participant, both female and male. A total of ten participants.

Step 9: Counting the linguistic features used by both the female and male participants. First, counting the total use of hedges. Second, counting the total use of minimal responses and third, counting the total use of interruptions.

Step 10: Counting the linguistic features used by the female participants. First, counting the total use of hedges utilized by female participants. Second, counting the total use of minimal responses utilized by the female participants and third, counting the total use of interruptions made by female participants.

Step 11: Counting the linguistic features used by the male participants. First, counting the total use of hedges utilized by male participants. Second, counting the total use of minimal responses utilized by the male participants and third, counting the total use of interruptions made by male participants.

Step 12: Counting the linguistic features of hedges, minimal responses and interruptions used by each female participant.

Step 13: Counting the linguistic features of hedges, minimal responses and interruptions used by each male participant.

Step 14: Comparing the frequencies of the linguistic features between the female participants' and the male participants' use of the linguistic features. First, counting difference in use of hedges. Second, counting difference in use of minimal responses and third, counting difference in use of interruptions.

Step 15: Comparing the frequencies of the linguistic features between the female participants use of the linguistic features. First, counting difference in use of hedges. Second, counting difference in use of minimal responses and third, counting difference in use of interruptions.

Step 16: Comparing the frequencies of the linguistic features between the male participants use of the linguistic features. First, counting difference in use of hedges. Second, counting difference in use of minimal responses and third, counting difference in use of interruptions.

Step 17: Analyzing the findings.

5. Results and Analysis

This section presents the results and analysis, and it will be presented as follows. First, the overall results will be presented. Second, the results and analysis of hedges is given. Third, the results and analysis of minimal responses is provided followed by the results and analysis of interruptions. In the excerpts female participants are marked (f) and male participants are marked (m). The linguistic features are marked in **bold**.

5.1 Overall Results Female and Male Participants

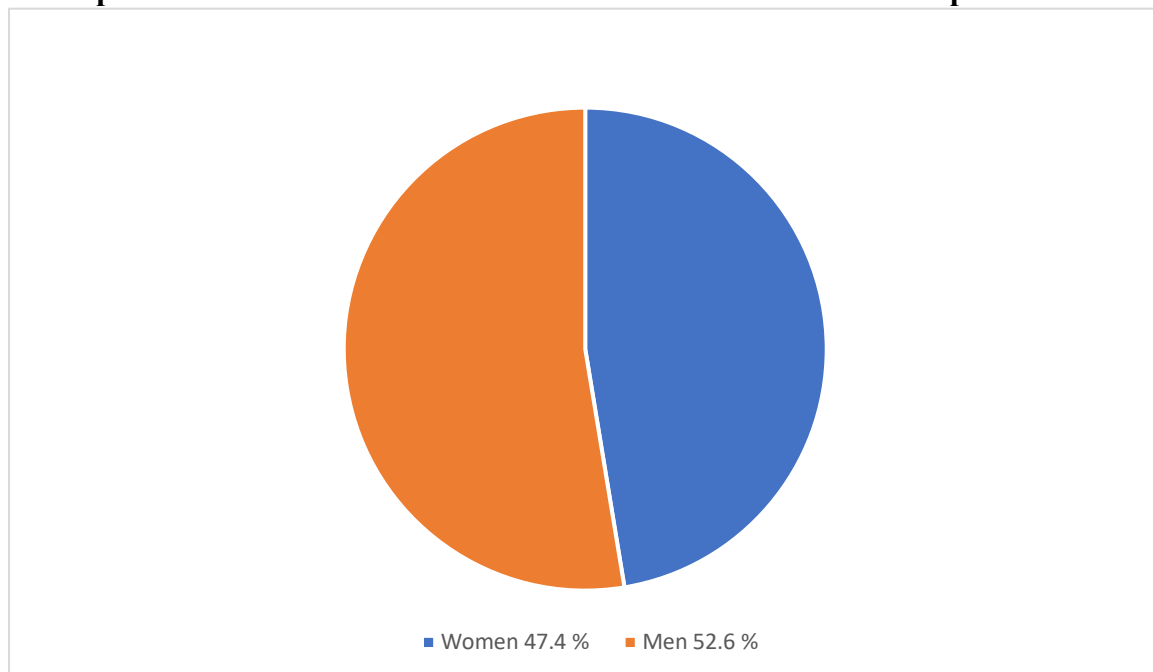
5.1.1 Total Wordcount

	Total	Women	Men
Wordcount	7061	3347	3714
Hedges	258	172	86
Minimal responses	150	93	57
Interruptions	128	48	80

5.1.2 Frequency of Linguistic Features / 1000 words

	Total	Women	Men
Wordcount	1000	474	526
Hedges	36.5	24.4	12.2
Minimal responses	21.2	13.2	8.1
Interruptions	18.1	6.8	11.3

5.1.3 Speech Distribution of Words between Female and Male Participants



As shown in the diagram above, the male participants speak 5.1 percentage units more than the female participants.

5.1.4 Distribution of Linguistic Features: Female Participants

	Zanab	Colleen	Alexa	Nancy	Raven
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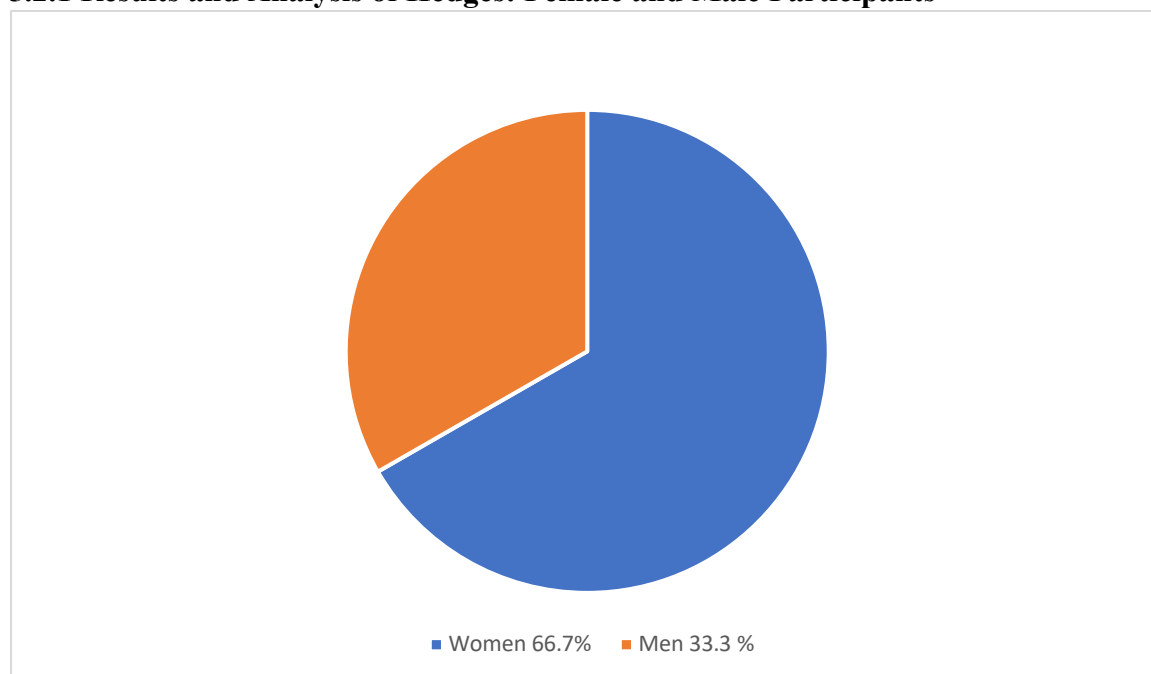
Total wordcount	902	721	604	290	830
Hedges	24	41	50	8	49
Minimal responses	6	19	20	17	31
Interruptions	10	17	9	3	9

5.1.5 Distribution of Linguistic Features: Male Participants

	Cole	Matt	Brennon	Bartise	SK
Total wordcount	982	958	417	933	424
Hedges	30	1	14	32	9
Minimal responses	12	12	12	15	6
Interruptions	23	28	16	10	3

5.2 Hedges

5.2.1 Results and Analysis of Hedges: Female and Male Participants



The results show that the female participants use hedges 33.4 percentage units more than the male participants. According to previous research, women tend to use hedges more than men, which is evident in this corpus. The female participants use hedges in both mixed-sex

conversations (Excerpt 1) and in same sex conversations (Excerpt 2). The male participants tend to use hedges when they speak longer sentences (Excerpt 3). Additionally, it is noteworthy that even though the men speak 5.1 percentage units more than the women, the women tend to use more hedges. As we have seen in previous research, Lakoff identifies the use of hedges as to imply weakness, insecurity, and powerlessness. Furthermore, Lakoff argues that the use of for example hedges is something women are taught from an early age and indicate “ladylike” linguistic behavior or patterns. Since these features are used in same-sex conversations, this could indicate that the weakness and powerlessness is present even though men are not present in the conversations. However, noteworthy is that hedges are not only used to indicate uncertainty, which is important to remember. If the use of hedges presented in this study is an indication of what learners are exposed to through EE, as future educators, this is something we should be aware of. We can be aware if students pick up on these features when speaking English in the classroom. We can also give students homework looking for hedges in a TV-show (EE) at home.

Excerpt 1

(m) BRENNON: Interruption--- And the dreams good to be in.

(f) ALEXA: I don't, **like**, this is too. I think, **like**, this was the difficult part. **Like**, taking you home will just be, **like**, meeting my family.

(m) BRENNON: Interruption--- Yeah.

(f) ALEXA: **Like**, that's it.

(m) BRENNON: What is something about home that you might be nervous about?

(f) ALEXA: I'm comfortable with my decision but nobody else, **like**, understands my decision.

Excerpt 1 shows evidence of a female participant using hedges in a mixed-sex conversation. In Excerpt 1 the female participant (Alexa) and the male participant (Brennon) are having a conversation with each other. There are 343 words used in the conversation, where the female participant uses 152 words and the male participant 191 words. Both participants use 26 sentences equally, which shows that the female participant sentences are shorter compared to the male participant. Even though the male participant uses more words, the female participant still uses more hedges. She uses 13 hedges and the male participant 6 hedge, which is more than

twice as many times as the male participants. In Excerpt 1 we can see the female participant use hedges in every sentence she utters, and the male participant uses none.

Excerpt 2

(f) RAVEN: I feel, **like**, all our problem is, **like**, at first all we were doing is having, **like**, realistic conversations and, **like**, just very serious all the time.

(f) COLLEEN: So, now you're letting loose here?

(f) RAVEN: Yeah, now. **Like**, literally, **like**, you know, **like**, just making jokes with each other.

(f) ALEXA: Yeah.

(f) RAVEN: I need to bring the energy. I need to, **like**, really start to open up.

(f) ALEXA: Yeah. It took a moment, **like**, with, **like**, the whole sex thing. It took a moment. Like I was telling you.

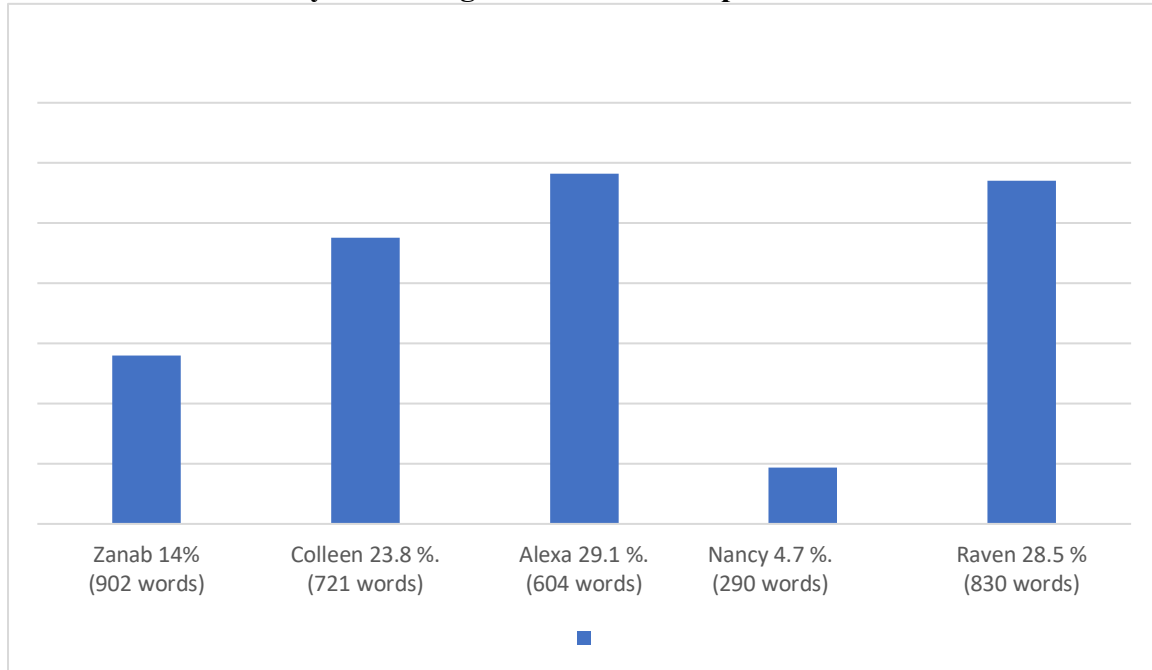
Excerpt 2 shows the hedge use in a same-sex conversation between three of the female participants (Raven, Colleen, and Alexa). Their conversation consists of 151 words, 16 sentences and 16 hedges. The hedges are divided between the female participants Alexa and Raven. Where Raven uses 67 words over 4 sentences, with 8 hedges and Alexa uses 74 words, 6 sentences and 8 hedges. So, even though Raven uses less words she still stands for half the use of the hedges. Colleen uses no hedges in the conversation. However, she only uses 10 words over 5 sentences.

Excerpt 3

(m) SK: **Like**, sometimes I have to, **like**, wake myself up. **Like**, "OK, OK. Alright. Be a gentleman, **like**, OK".

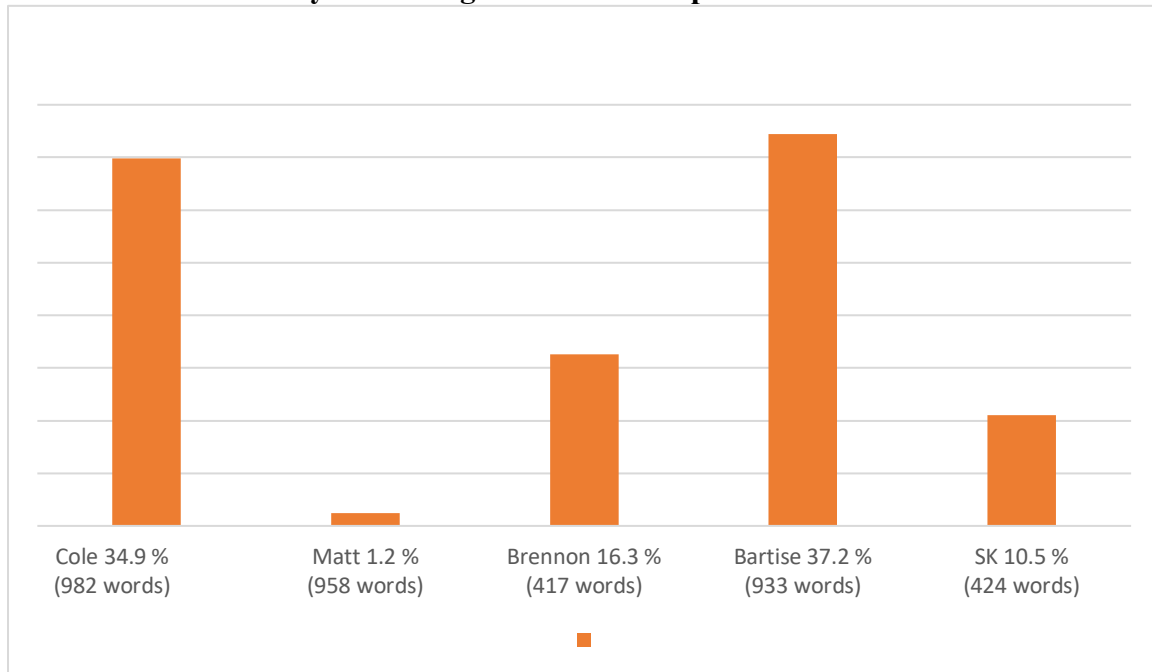
In Excerpt 3 we can see a male participant (SK) using several hedges over the course of 4 consecutive sentences. This is significant since the male participant (SK) uses 5 hedges out of his total 9 throughout the entire corpus.

5.2.2 Results and Analysis of Hedges: Female Participants



The columns present the linguistic feature of hedges divided among the female participants. Since the women use more hedges than men overall it is interesting to investigate the distributions of these hedges. Of all the hedges used by the female participants, there are three participants (Colleen, Alexa, Raven) who utilize hedges more than 20 percentage units, one participant (Zanab) who uses hedges more than 10 percentage units and one participant (Nancy) who uses hedges less than 5 percentage units. The distribution among the female participants show that hedges are most used by female participant, Alexa. This is noteworthy since she is the female participant who has the third highest wordcount. Which means that even though she speaks 298 words less than the female participant (Zanab) who has the highest wordcount she still uses more hedges. However, as Talbot (2010) suggests, hedges can also be used as a "filler" word, which might be happening here. Furthermore, what is further significant is that the female participant (Zanab) who has the highest wordcount, is the one who has the second lowest percentage of hedge use.

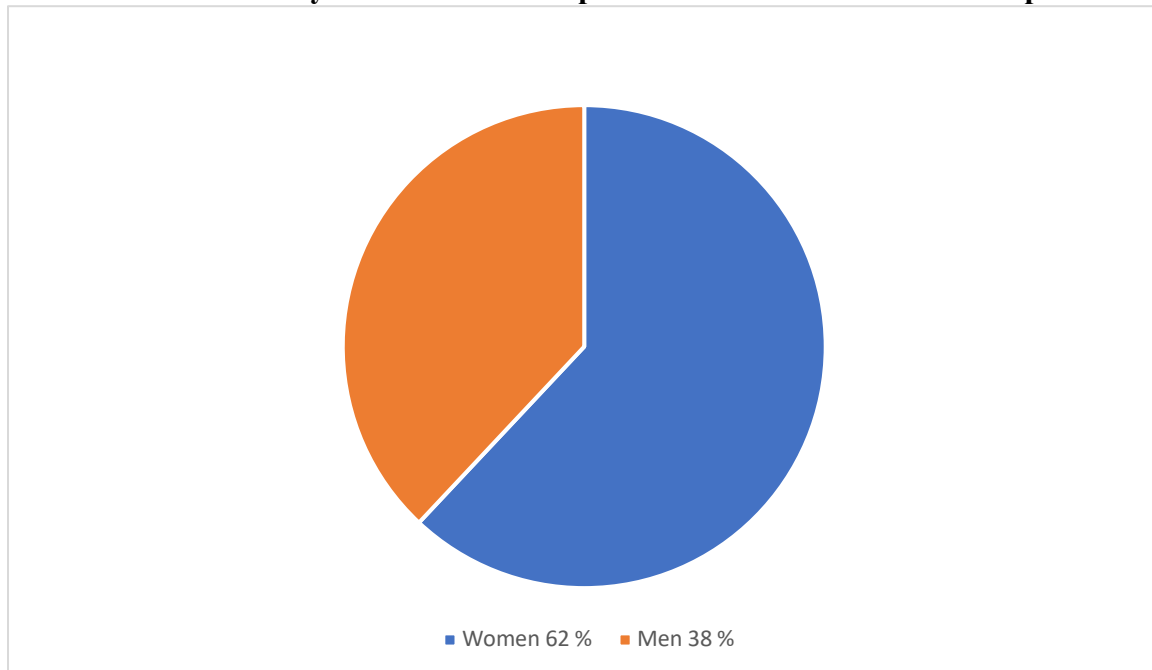
5.2.3 Results and Analysis of Hedges: Male Participants



The columns present the linguistic feature of hedges divided amongst the male participants. The distribution shows that two of the male participants (Cole and Bartise) together stand for 72.1 % of the use of hedges. This might not be so noteworthy since they are amongst the top three male participants who have the highest total wordcount. However, the male participant (Matt), who has the second highest total wordcount only stands for 1.2 % of the hedge utilization, which makes his hedge use significant. The other two male participants (Brennon and SK) are the ones with the lowest total wordcount and stand for 26.8 % of the total use of hedges.

5.3 Minimal responses

5.3.1 Results and Analysis of Minimal Responses: Female and Male Participants



The results show that the female participants use minimal responses 24 percentage units more often than the male participants. According to Fellegly (1995, p. 186), minimal responses are sounds such as *yeah*, *mmhmm*, *right* and *uh-huh* and are expressions to indicate the level of interest in and engagement with the speaker. Furthermore, Coates (2004) claims that minimal responses are more often used by women than men. As with hedges, not only is this what previous research shows but it is noteworthy that women use them more even though they speak less than men. Furthermore, we can see a pattern that in same-sex conversations all female participants use minimal responses and, in some conversations, more frequently than in mixed-sex conversations (Excerpt 4). Additionally, in some mixed-sex conversations minimal responses are more frequent for the male participants than for the female participants (Excerpt 5).

Excerpt 4

(f) ALEXA: **Yeah.**

(f) COLLEEN: **Yeah.**

(f) RAVEN: I feel, like, all our problem is, like, at first all we were doing is having, like, realistic conversations and, like, just very serious all the time.

(f) COLLEEN: So, now you're letting loose here?

(f) RAVEN: **Yeah**, now. Like, literally, like, you know, like, just making jokes with each other.

(f) ALEXA: **Yeah**.

(f) RAVEN: I need to bring the energy. I need to, like, really start to open up.

(f) ALEXA: **Yeah**. It took a moment, like, with, like, the whole sex thing. It took a moment. Like I was telling you.

(f) RAVEN: **Yeah. Yeah**.

(f) COLLEEN: **Mm-hmm?**

Using the same-sex conversation as from Excerpt 2 where three female participants (Raven, Collen, and Alexa) are having a conversation. We can see the extensive use of minimal responses. As we can see in Excerpt 4, minimal responses are used in 7 out of the 10 sentences. Minimal responses are used by all the female participants almost equally. Alexa uses 3 minimal responses over 3 sentences and 23 words, Raven uses 3 minimal responses over 4 sentences and 58 words and Colleen uses 2 minimal responses over 8 words.

Excerpt 5

(m) BARTISE: **Mmm-hmm.**

(f) RAVEN: I feel reassured in, like, the way that I want to receive love, and the way that I give it, you know? And I hope that you feel the same way.

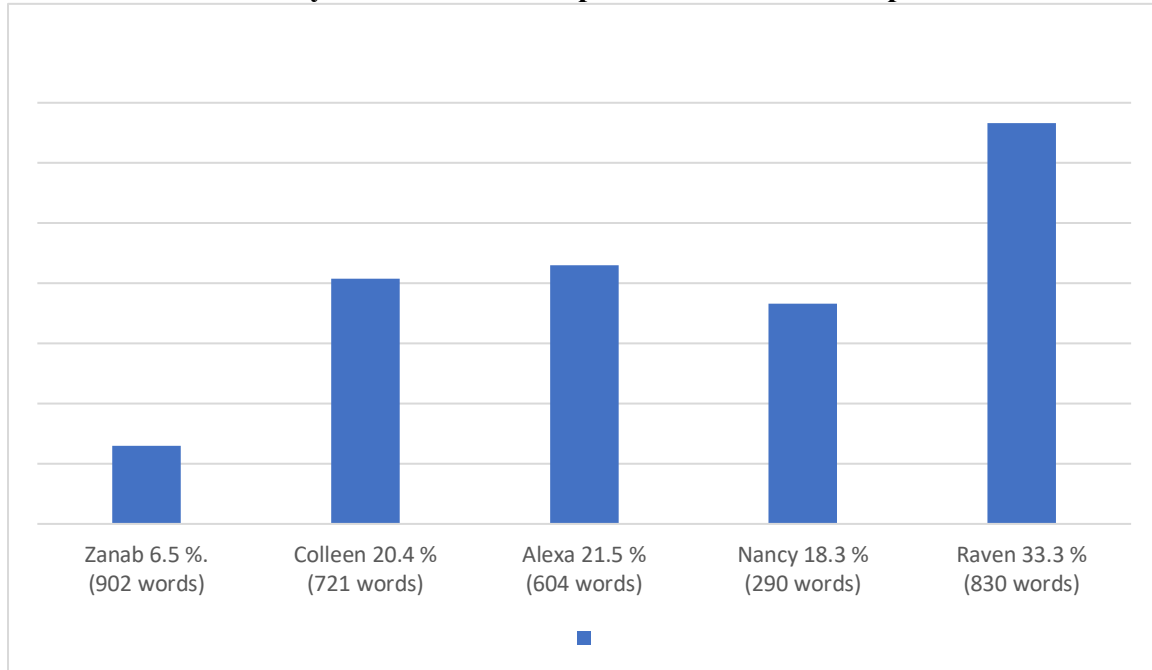
(m) BARTISE: **Yeah**.

(f) RAVEN: We're doing the right thing. Like, I think SK and I definitely are, like, very more, like, methodical people, like, you know, just more realists, like.

(m) BARTISE: **Mm-hmm.**

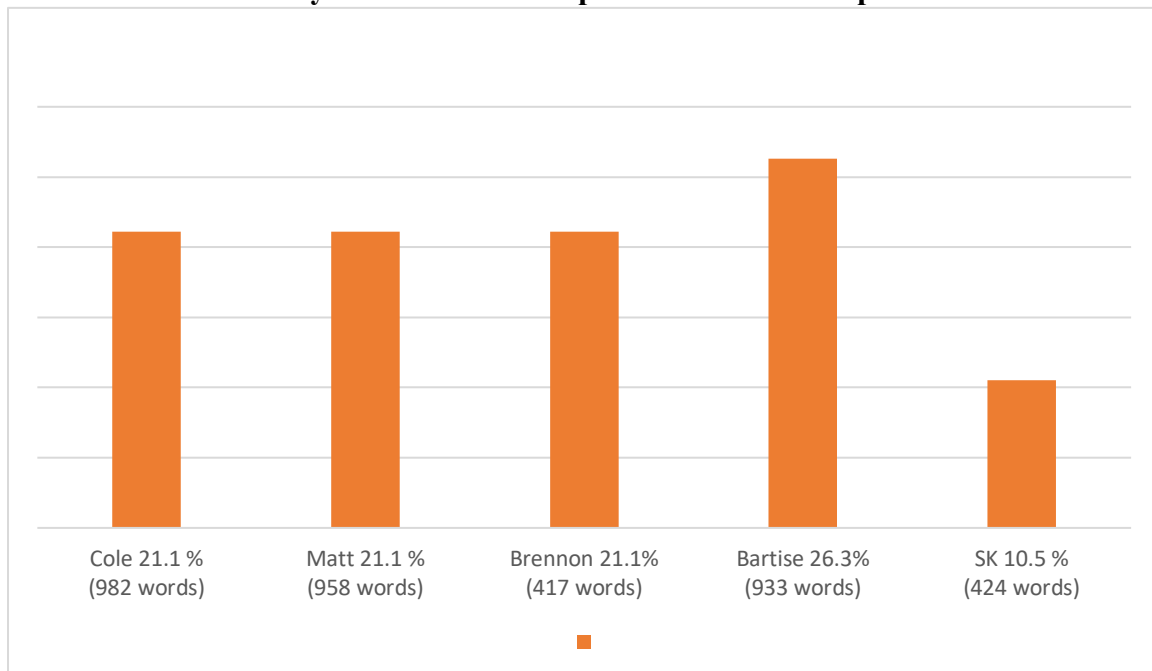
In Excerpt 5 we can see an example of a male participant (Bartise) is using a minimal response in every reply and the female participant (Raven) is using longer sentences.

5.3.2 Results and Analysis of Minimal Responses: Female Participants



The columns present the linguistic feature of minimal responses divided amongst the female participants. Here the second and third female participants (Colleen and Raven) with the second and third highest wordcount are the ones who hold the largest percentage of minimal responses. What is striking is that the female participant with the highest wordcount (Zanab) is the one with the lowest number of minimal responses.

5.3.3 Results and Analysis of Minimal Responses: Male Participants

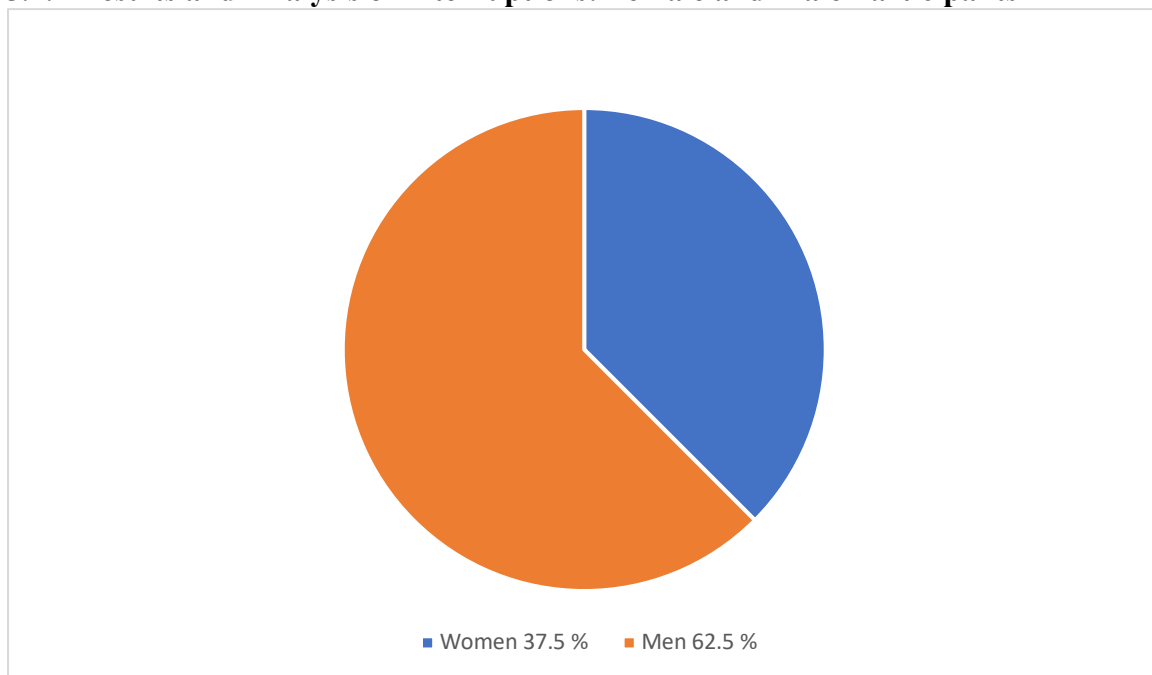


The columns present the linguistic feature of minimal responses distributed amongst the male participants. Minimal responses are almost equally used by the male participants, except for the

male participant (SK), who has the second lowest wordcount. The male participant (Brennon) who has the lowest wordcount shares the third place of most minimal responses use. The participant (Bartise) has the second highest word count and uses minimal responses most frequently amongst the other male participants. He participants in both same-sex and mixed-sex conversations throughout the corpus.

5.4 Interruptions

5.4.1 Results and Analysis of Interruptions: Female and Male Participants



The results show that the male participants interrupt 25 percentage units more often than the female participants. An interesting aspect is what happens when the male participants interrupt compared to when female participants interrupt. When the male participants interrupt, they tend to interrupt and take over or the conversation (Excerpt 6). When the female participants interrupt, they tend to do so by using shorter sentences or minimal responses (Excerpt 7). Another way one can utilize interruptions is when using banter. This becomes evident in the interruptions when trying to tease and banter between each other and can be seen to be utilized by the participants throughout the corpus (Excerpt 8).

Excerpt 6

(f) COLLEEN: I always use it whenever I get, like, hit on. I'll be, like, "sorry, I have a boyfriend". But, like, now...

(m) MATT: **Interruption** --- You actually mean it. Now it's actually true, but it's not a boyfriend though it's fiancé you know what I mean?

In Excerpt 6 we can see the male participant (Matt) interrupting the female participant (Colleen). When doing so he takes over the conversation in the middle of her sentence. Matt is the male participant with the highest interruptions scores. Most of his interruptions occur in his conversations with his fiancée Colleen.

Excerpt 7

(m) BARTISE: Me and Raven had a huge, like, connection because we shared, like, everything fitness related and everything and so we connected strongly over that. With me and you was, like, I didn't, when I went to the pod with Raven I knew I'd have to bring the energy and that she'd be kind of trying to match me. But for me and you know, it's just, like, boom, boom, boom.

(f) NANCY: **Interruption**--- Boom, boom, boom.

(m) BARTISE: We're climbing on each other, we're climbing on each other, you know.

(f) NANCY: Yeah.

(m) BARTISE: And so that's what I fell in love with.

(f) NANCY: **Interruption**--- Yeah.

Excerpt 7 is part of a conversation taking place between the male participant (Bartise) and female participant (Nancy), who are one of the engaged couples. The excerpt starts with the female participant interrupting the male participant but also confirming what he just said. The Excerpt is an example of when a female participant uses interruptions to either utter a short sentence or a minimal response.

Excerpt 8

ZANAB: Thanks, babe. It's the mouth guards for me. We're past the point now...

(m) COLE: **Interruption** --- She was like...

(f) ZANAB: Like, yeah, gotta protect these chompers...

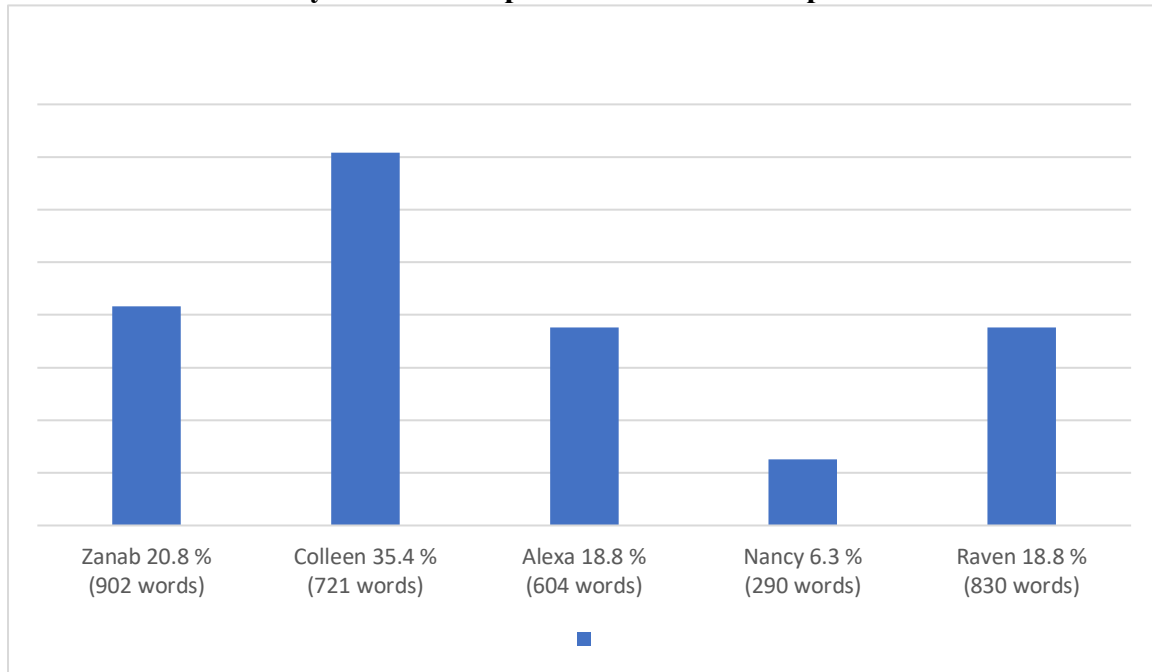
(m) COLE: **Interruption** --- And then we're just both, like, mumble talking to each other.

(f) ZANAB: **Interruption** ---Yes. It was like pure panic. I had to rip it out so I could say what I really felt.

Excerpt 8 shows a conversation between the male participant (Cole) and female participant (Zanab) who are engaged to be married. The excerpt shows an example of them using

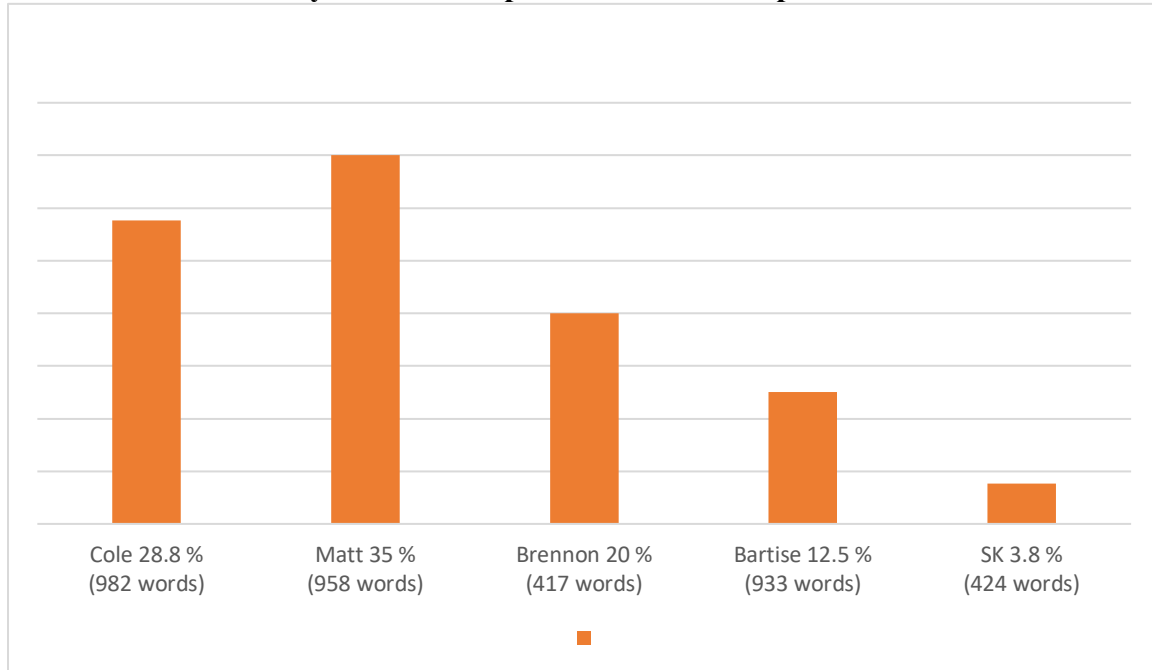
interruptions to banter between each other, which is seen in their relationship through the corpus.

5.4.2 Results and Analysis of Interruptions: Female Participants



The columns present the linguistic feature of interruptions divided amongst the female participants. As seen in the columns the female participant (Colleen) has the third largest wordcount and she uses interruptions the most. What is remarkable is that she is engaged to the male participant (Matt) who holds the second highest word count among the males however, he stands for a somewhat significant percentage of the interruptions occurring amongst the male participants. This poses the question if, the female participant (Colleen), who is engaged to him, feels the need to interrupt more since he tends to take over the conversation. The female participant (Collen) engages in both same-sex and mixed-sex conversations throughout the corpus and 10 out of the 17 interruptions used by her occur in the conversation with the male participant (Matt).

5.4.3 Results and Analysis of Interruptions: Male Participants



The columns present the linguistic feature of interruptions divided amongst the male participants. As mentioned above, the male participant (Matt) is the one who represents a significant percentage of the male participants' interruptions. He interrupts 6.2 percentage units more often than male participant (Cole) with the second highest wordcount and 31.2 percentage units more than the male participant (SK), who has the lowest wordcount and using interruptions the least. He only engages in mixed-sex conversation in this episode, which shows he only interrupts women. Even though we don't know what this looks like in other episodes and in same-sex conversations, it is still noteworthy and aligns with Coates (2004, p. 115) results suggesting that men undermine women's rights to speak in mixed-sex conversations.

6. Discussion

The results of this study investigating hedges, minimal responses and interruptions found in the reality TV-show *Love is Blind* had a total corpus consisting of 7061 words. Of all the hedges, 66.7% were used by female participants while 33.4% by the male ones. Of all the minimal responses, 62 % were used by female participants and 38 % made by the male participants. Of all the interruptions, 37.5 % were used by the female participants while 62.5 % were made by the male participants. Furthermore, results showed that the male participants spoke 5.1 percentage units more than the female participants.

Results showed a consistency with previous research, i.e., that women use more hedges and minimal responses, and men tend to interrupt more. Previous research by Lakoff, suggests that women tend to use more hedges than men. What the results might suggest then, is that this distribution of the linguistic features of hedges and minimal responses might reflect gender and be a result of gender construction. Barron, Gu & Steen (2017) explain rather than being an expression of who we are, gender is acted and consequently viewers of this TV-show might pick up on acting gender through these linguistic features. The speech patterns found in this specific EE activity might then have an impact on the speech patterns that teenagers are exposed to.

Research on the use of minimal responses, according to Coates (2004), consistently shows that women use them more frequently than men, which is also the findings in this study. However, if the hedge use is something that suggest women language as lacking, which Lakoff suggests, is not determined in this study. It might also reveal that the patterns of minimal responses and hedges are a preferred pattern in relation to other choices of utterances. However, an important point worth mentioning here is what Talbot (2010) suggests regarding hedges. Talbot (2010, p. 37) states that hedges are "filler" words and that they do not always express a level of uncertainty. Consequently, if the participants use hedges, they might not always be a sign of uncertainty but simply a "filler" word. These filler words could be a result of a lack of vocabulary as suppose to a lack of assertiveness on the part of the speaker.

Examples show “results indicate that in mixed-sex conversations men infringe women's right to speak, specifically women's right to finish a turn” (Coates 2004, p. 115). According to Talbot (2010, p. 98), when viewed through the dominance framework, language patterns are seen as representations of patriarchal social structure. Therefore, discrepancies between how men and women use language are seen as manifestations of male privilege. This becomes apparent when it comes to interruptions, since “interruptions are viewed as ‘a way of “doing” power in face-to-face interaction (West and Zimmerman 1983:111)” (Talbot 2010, p. 98). Furthermore, Crawford (1997) describes patterns of interruptions as “asymmetrical and dependent on gender and status” (Crawford 1997, p. 41). However, interruptions might not always be a sign of power. Interruptions can also be an expression of banter or playfulness in the conversations between the participants.

Pragmatics help make the findings of the study significant. As stated by Yule (2020) pragmatics is “the study of speaker meaning and how more is communicated than is said” (Yule 2020, p. 340) and it helps us decode the hidden message behind what is being said. For second

language learners it might be hard to detect these hidden messages since they might be a part of a different context and system than the learners first language. This is where interlanguage pragmatics can be useful since it “focuses more specifically on the communicative behavior of non-native speakers, attempting to communicate in their second language” (Yule 1996, p. 88). Furthermore, Hedge (2000, p. 46) states that two of the components in the concept communicative language ability consists of linguistic and pragmatic competence. According to Hedge (2000, p. 410, 411) linguistic competence entails the knowledge regarding grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, meaning and grammatical structure and pragmatic competence involves understanding how to properly state an intention and do it in a manner that is appropriate for the audience as well as the context it is being expressed. This study has investigated linguistic features found in a possible EE activity of a reality TV-show. If learners watch this show outside the EFL classroom, they might be able to grasp the linguistic features and gain knowledge about how to communicate in English which would result in them being able to improve their linguistic and pragmatic competence.

Additionally, the previous research presents by Sundqvist (2009), concludes that moderate increase in time spent on an EE activity can have positive consequences for students' oral proficiency and their vocabulary. Therefore, one consequence could be that if young people are exposed to the linguistic features of hedges, minimal responses and interruptions, it might have an affect their oral and vocabulary ability. It might also help teachers in the classroom. Hedge (2000) points out that “an important point for the teacher to note is that linguistic competence is an integral part of communicative competence” (Hedge 2000, p. 47). Teachers could assign homework for students to do homework involving an EE activity to learn about gender related linguistic features which might help them to gain more linguistic competence regarding gender.

Aspects that might have affected the results are that the participants might have been casted, which shapes what participants are participating in the TV-show. Another aspect is what class they come from. Since the participants come from all over the USA there are different socioeconomic aspects to consider. The age is a further factor that creates different conditions that might affect the result in how they behave linguistically. The couple Bartise, 25 years and Nancy, 31 years, for example, have different level of education and economically Nancy has been able to work up a career, whereas Bartise has just finished college and starting his career. To further speak for the economical differences, we have Brennon and Alexa where it is obvious that she comes from money and he does not is something we get to experience throughout the season. An additional aspect that might affect the results are the matters of race and cultural background. The couple Raven and SK are an example of this. Raven is mixed (white and

black) and SK is black and Nigerian. His Nigerian culture is something that is very present throughout their relationship. Even though all these aspects call for interesting discussions and interactions it might also limit their language and means of communication. There is also the fact that it is a produced TV-show so the participants might have been given cues to when to speak and what to say. They might even have been given a topic to talk about so to direct what is being said.

The biggest limitation of this study is that it does not reflect the usage of the linguistic features of hedges, minimal responses, and interruptions for the whole season, but only for one episode, which suggests that this specific corpus might not represent the entire TV-show. Furthermore, the study only looks at certain words from the different categories within hedges and minimal responses and does not account for overlaps. The results might also be different if the analysis was done on the show, but in a different country. The American version of the show was used since it is the original country, however, the results might be different if the features were analyzed from the same show but in another country. Another limitation is the fact that the participants have been casted. Participants have applied to participate in the TV-show and then been selected or not. The limits also can be found in the fact that the prosodic and paralinguistic features are not analyzed. Further, the dramatic effect of the reality format might limit the authenticity of the study and it might be semi-scripted or producers might ask certain questions to produce a certain answer. Finally, it should also be mentioned that since the participants consist of 50 % female participants and 50 % male participants the linguistic features are not a proportional representation in this corpus. For it to be proportional the female participants and the male participants would have had to use the linguistics features equally.

Future research that might be noteworthy is to investigate how these features are used by students in the EFL classroom. It would be interesting to do this in correlation to the level of EE activity the students are exposed to, and maybe other linguistic features might be of interest. Furthermore, a study of the teacher's use of these linguistic features would be of interest to investigate and examine how it might affect the classroom conversations.

7. Conclusion

This study has set out to examine the linguistic features of hedges, minimal responses and interruptions found in the EE activity of the reality TV-show *Love is Blind*. Furthermore, its aim has been to investigate how they are utilized within the female group and the male group, respectively. The selection of this EE activity was based on previous research stating that

teenagers consume a significant amount of TV. Furthermore, the purpose to investigate the corpus in relationship to gender was to discover how gender is performed through language in this particular TV-show. This holds great importance since the curriculum for the upper secondary school promotes equality within the Swedish school system.

Overall results showed that when it comes to speech distribution the male participants speak 5.1 percentage units more than the female participants. When it comes to the linguistic features, the female participants use hedges 33.4 percentage units more often than the male participants and they also use minimal responses 24 percentage units more often than the male participants. Regarding interruptions, the male participants interrupt 25 percentage units more often than the female participants. An interesting is that even though the female participants speak less than the male participants overall, they still utilize hedges and minimal responses more.

Within the female group consisting of five participants, the use of hedges is divided as follows: Three participants (Colleen, Alexa, Raven) utilize hedges more than 20 %, one participant (Zanab) uses hedges more than 10 % and one participant (Nancy) uses hedges less than 5 %. Minimal responses are mostly used by the female participants (Colleen and Raven) with the second and third highest wordcount. What is interesting is that the female participant (Zanab) with the highest wordcount is the one using minimal responses the least. Interruptions are most frequently used by the female participant Colleen, who has the third largest wordcount, followed by the female participant Zanab, who has the highest wordcount.

Within the male group consisting of five participants hedges are used most frequently by the male participants Cole and Bartise, who hold the highest and third highest wordcount. The male participant (Matt) with the second highest wordcount stands for 1.2 % of the hedge utilization, which makes his hedge use stand out. When it comes to minimal responses, the male participants use them almost equally, except for the male participant (SK), who holds the second lowest wordcount. Interruptions are utilized most frequently by the male participant (Matt). He interrupts 31.2 percentage units more than the male participant (SK), who has the lowest wordcount and interrupts the least.

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9. Appendix: Full transcript

Love Is Blind – Season 3 – Episode 5: Trouble in Paradise

Tags: **Men** **Women** **Hedge** **Interruption** **Minimal response**

ZANAB: I promise I won't look like this on the reg.

COLE: **Interruption** --- Oh, she looks hot on the reg.

ZANAB: You wouldn't believe it, looking at this.

COLE: I don't know. I still kinda like it.

ZANAB: Thanks, babe. It's the mouth guards for me. We're past the point now...

COLE: **Interruption** --- She was **like**...

ZANAB: **Like**, **yeah**, gotta protect these chompers.

COLE: **Interruption** --- And then we're just both, **like**, mumble talking to each other.

ZANAB: **Interruption** ---Yes. It was like pure panic. I had to rip it out so I could say what I really felt.

COLE: Good night, Zay. Love you.

ZANAB: Then with a lisp. "There's a bug in here!"

RAVEN: Welcome to our worlds. We just drank some Pepto-Bismol. It's so sexy to me.

ALEXA: Showcasing our messy room?

BRENNON: **Yeah**.

ALEXA: We'll be messy people now.

BRENNON: There we go.

ALEXA: Let's not be the messy people.

BARTISE: How do you feel about getting out of this ranch and doing some excursions today?

NANCY: Yes!

BARTISE: **Interruption** --- Okay.

NANCY: What are we doing? Okay.

BARTISE: First thing I see is pizza.

NANCY: Wine, pizza. Let's do it.

COLLEEN: Hey, look at us. Look at the yacht. I'm so excited.

MATT: Right now, we're having fun and we're enjoying each other's time, to see if we can even do that.

COLLEEN: Hello.

MATT: Hey.

COLLEEN: Hi, how are ya?

MATT: In order to get the most out of this whole experience, that's what you have to do. You have to see if you can enjoy talking to this person and enjoy hanging out with this person and we are.

MATT: Cheers, baby.

COLLEEN: Cheers, babe. I wanna pop some bottles.

COLE: Should I do it like a model would do it?

ZANAB: Interruption --- Let me sit down and, like, really enjoy it. Yes! Yes!

ZANAB: It's the sloth. It's the sloth shorts for me.

COLE: I'm an animal.

ZANAB: To your surf lesson.

COLE: How are you feeling Miss Three-Fourths-a-Bottle?

ZANAB: How hot you look on a surfboard.

COLE: Mm. Yeah.

ZANAB: I equally liked watching you.

COLE: Really?

ZANAB: Uh-huh.

COLE: That was sweet. I'd sit on a beach with you any day.

ZANAB: Yeah?

COLE: Mm-hmm.

ZANAB: Even though I won't get in the water with you?

COLE: Mm. It's okay.

ZANAB: Give me some champagne on the beach, I will, like, really, watch you do anything.

COLE: Interruption --- Watch, watch whatever. It's fine.

ZANAB: I will watch you do anything.

COLE: After seeing all the guys.

ZANAB: Yep.

COLE: You having any second thoughts?

ZANAB: Not one.

COLE: Not one?

ZANAB: Not one. No. After seeing all the girls are you having any second thoughts?

ZANAB: Wow. It's, it's the hesitation for me. It's the hesitation. Some good the quietness. Maybe I don't even want to hear your answer.

COLE: No, I'm not having any second thoughts.

ZANAB: No?

COLE: Not even a little bit. Raven's too much for me. Alexa is just not my type. Colleen is happily off with Matt. I mean everyone's just wonderful. So.

ZANAB: I know, but you were really excited to meet Colleen.

COLE: Interruption --- I was.

ZANAB: and you said that last night too, you were like, "oh her and Matt"

COLE: The majority of girls that I've dated have looked more like Colleen.

ZANAB: OK.

COLE: Interruption --- So.

ZANAB: I can see that. I would peg you with someone that looks like Colleen.

COLE: Interruption --- Exactly. But personality wise you are much more up my alley.

ZANAB: Hmm. How do I do physically on your type?

COLE: Physically you're different than anyone I've ever dated.

ZANAB: Oh. Is that hard for you?

COLE: Does it seem like it's hard for me?

ZANAB: I don't know.

COLE: Heavy webbed. No, I'm good. You gotta stop fattening me up.

ZANAB: Ah, Come on. You're okay with fattening me up though?

ZANAB: Interruption --- You're like, "No".

COLE: You're fattening yourself up.

ZANAB: Mm! Wow. Cole.

ZANAB: Being a 30-year-old woman, I really try to not be that female that is insecure. But Cole is unfiltered 1000% of the time but that's part of Cole being just so transparent, which is one of the many things I love about him. We do have the same solid, like, foundation that we built our love on which I hope does continue because, I, in no way, want a love that I have to question or be, you know, insecure about.

COLE: That's a chicken. That's the wrong noise. What does a seagull make? "Mine! Mine!" It's over now. Just forget about it. Let it go.

COLLEEN: I got my fiancé. I got my bubbles.

MATT: Cheers to us.

COLLEEN: Cheers! Hey, look at us.

MATT: Look at us.

COLLEEN: I'm so happy.

MATT: Me too. Especially after meeting everybody.

COLLEEN: Yeah, everyone's, like, great. Its.

MATT: Interruption --- But we're there. I said it to everybody, too, last night, so..." I don't care about anybody here. I got my eyes on one person". That's alright. They know it.

COLLEEN: I'm so happy.

MATT: Me too.

MATT: How was it meeting the guys that you dated?

COLLEEN: It was...interesting.

MATT: Interruption --- Was it?

COLLEEN: But, like, not like, like...It was you.

MATT: Uh-huh? Uh-huh?

COLLEEN: and then Brennon and Cole were top two.

MATT: Right, Right, Right.

COLLEEN: I think I told Brennon, "Remember when you gave me a panic attack?"

MATT: About what?

COLLEEN: `Cause he's the one that... It was the rejection for me.

MATT: He shut you down, huh?

COLLEEN: Yeah. Him and Cole.

MATT: Y'all talked about that, a little bit, last night?

COLLEEN: I think so. I don't... I really...

MATT: What'd you think about Cole?

COLLEEN: He was quieter than...

MATT: Interruption --- He's kinda...

COLLEEN: Interruption --- `Cause he was so, like...like, bubbly in the pods.

MATT: Interruption --- He's a good talker.

COLLEEN: Yeah.

MATT: Interruption --- Yeah, absolutely.

COLLEEN: I feel like he was quieter. At the same time, like, I always knew it was you.

MATT: Interruption --- Exactly.

COLLEEN: So, I was like...

MATT: Interruption --- Exactly.

COLLEEN: So, I was, like, "No. That's my guy."

MATT: Yup. Yup.

COLLEEN: That's my guy.

MATT: Gotta say, the only one that I really dated was Alexa.

COLLEEN: Yeah, but, like...

MATT: Interruption --- But it was more like best friend vibes...

COLLEEN: Interruption ---Best friends.

MATT: You know what I mean?

COLLEEN: And, like, only these people understand, like, doing this whole thing.

MATT: Interruption --- That's why we can relate on all that, you know?

COLLEEN: Yeah. Like falling in love...

MATT: Interruption ---That's why our relationship is so strong.

COLLEEN: ... in seven days, like.

MATT: Are you in love?

COLLEEN: Babe!

MATT: Of course.

COLLEEN: Of course, I am.

MATT: Aw, I love it. You're so cute.

MATT: So, I got a question for you.

COLLEEN: Uh-huh?

MATT: We built an emotional connection. The physical came, obviously, when we met each other. So, what about when we go back to Dallas? What about whenever, whenever, other guys are there whenever other people are hitting on you or, or what it is. How are you, how are you gonna respond to it?

COLLEEN: Yeah, I mean, honestly. Okay, this is probably not gonna be the best answer, but, like, it's so good to, like, actually be, like, "oh, no, no, no, I'm taken".

MATT: Yeah, I love that. I love that.

COLLEEN: Because I always.

MATT: Interruption --- I love that.

COLLEEN: I always.

MATT: Interruption --- See, yeah, I like that.

COLLEEN: I always use it whenever I get, like, hit on. I'll be, like, "sorry, I have a boyfriend". But, like, now...

MATT: Interruption --- You actually mean it. Now it's actually true, but it's not a boyfriend though it's fiancé you know what I mean?

COLLEEN: Now it's "I have a husband. Sorry, I'm taken.

MATT: Interruption--- You have a husband. How's that sound?

COLLEEN: Oh my God. It's very nice.

MATT: Yeah, yeah. Very nice. I love it. I love it.

COLLEEN: I told you, like, you've become my security blanket...

MATT: Interruption--- Absolutely.

COLLEEN: ...Almost, where I'm just...

MATT: Interruption--- Absolutely. Is that because of how strong our relationship is?

COLLEEN: Yeah, just, like...

MATT: Interruption--- It is right?

COLLEEN: How much I love you.

MATT: Absolutely. Absolutely. Honestly, I mean, you know my story. You know my history. I Was in a ten-year relationship, and we went through a lot. But the foundation that we built in the last three weeks is stronger than that entire deal.

COLLEEN: That's so sweet. Especially after, like, what you went through, like, I...

MATT: Interruption--- Right.

COLLEEN: ...I would never have to worry about you, like, looking at other girls.

MATT: Absolutely not.

COLLEEN: Interruption--- `Cause you know how that feels.

MATT: Absolutely. It's the worst feeling in the world. You know what I mean?

COLLEEN: Yeah.

MATT: You know what I mean?

COLLEEN: That's right.

MATT: Yeah.

COLLEEN: I will...

MATT: Interruption--- Think we'll get married?

MATT: Come on.

COLLEEN: Come on.

MATT: I love that response. I love that.

COLLEEN: Of course.

MATT: Interruption--- I love that.

COLLEEN: I'm never like this.

MATT: What?

COLLEEN: Like, uh...

MATT: Interruption--- Smitten?

COLLEEN: Yeah, well. Yeah.

MATT: Me neither.

ALEXA: My hat.

BRENNON: Mm. Looks great.

ALEXA: Does it? I can't see much. My...

BRENNON: Interruption--- Yeah.

ALEXA: My, my, visuals, like, here. I make this cute little country situation a little bit more fun.

BRENNON: Interruption--- you make this ranch very beachy.

ALEXA: It's my hat.

BRENNON: It's the hat.

ALEXA: After three weeks of carrying this bitch around...

BRENNON: Interruption--- You finally get to wear it.

ALEXA: Yeah, on a bench.

BRENNON: In the shade.

ALEXA: In the shades. It's been fun. I think it's, it's definitely been an adventure, and, like, I don't think that I could have done it with anyone else.

BRENNON: But I'm still nervous.

ALEXA: Why?

BRENNON: About just living together in the future.

ALEXA: Yeah. I feel like we've been doing that, like,

BRENNON: Interruption--- Yeah, we kinda have.

ALEXA: Yeah.

BRENNON: But we're, like, it's out of a suitcase. So, it's not the same.

ALEXA: Like, you being messy?

BRENNON: Interruption--- Do you have, like... No, I'm not messy.

ALEXA: Umm, I don't know, like...

BRENNON: Interruption--- I'm a little... I mean, I can be sometimes.

ALEXA: Interruption--- This week will say otherwise. But, like... maybe...

BRENNON: Interruption--- Okay, this is different. There's no, like, hamper to throw the dirty clothes. There's no, like, there's no organization going on here, it's just random stuff.

ALEXA: I don't know.

BRENNON: So, it's been bad.

ALEXA: Interruption--- We'll see, we'll see. 'Cause I'm the messy one. We can't, we can't have two messy people in one place or else...

BRENNON: Interruption--- I clean stuff up.

ALEXA: Okay.

BRENNON: I've got, like, a total of, like, 25 items and I just mix and match.

ALEXA: Lovely. I have, like, literally so many clothes, like, I don't re-wear outfits.

BRENNON: Oh.

ALEXA: Ever.

BRENNON: Uh, who is that, Marie Antoinette? Who, like, never wore the same outfit twice?

ALEXA: I don't know, but that's me.

BRENNON: I mean...

ALEXA: Interruption--- A look is a look.

BRENNON: OK.

BRENNON: If that's the worst thing about her, then, shit, I'll take it.

BRENNON: What do you think is in my closet? That's a good question.

ALEXA: Umm, I feel, like, you literally...

BRENNON: Interruption--- Country-boy shit.

ALEXA: Literally. It's gonna be a bunch of cowboy boots.

BRENNON: Interruption--- No, it's not. That's it. I brought all my cowboy boots that I own.

ALEXA: The two pairs?

BRENNON: That's it.

ALEXA: That's a lot of pairs.

BRENNON: That is a lot of pairs? Okay.

ALEXA: Yeah.

BRENNON: I'm a fashionista, okay?

ALEXA: No, no, no, no. Mm-mm. We're gonna go shopping. Like, we'll save the cowboy hat and the cowboy boots for, like, another day. Um.

BRENNON: Like, five years down the line?

ALEXA: Yeah.

BRENNON: Yeah.

ALEXA: Yeah. We'll get you, like, all, like, done up.

BRENNON: I try to be open to new fashion styles and stuff, but, yeah, I'm not gonna do that. That ain't happening. She'll figure that out quick.

ALEXA: Classy, bougie, ratchet. That's me. I'm a savage.

BRENNON: Hey, identify yourself, however.

ALEXA: Yeah.

NANCY: Pepperoni for you.

BARTISE: Let's try the salad.

NANCY: Mmm! Oh, my God. You have to...

BARTISE: Interruption--- I'm doing that next.

NANCY: Mmm! Mm, mm, mm.

BARTISE: This is delicious. Holy shit.

NANCY: Yeah?

BARTISE: Mm-hmm.

NANCY: Um, are you good, or should I top you off with a little...

BARTISE: Interruption--- I'm gonna kill this one and then get some of that.

NANCY: Just so you know, I don't ever want my partner to feel, like, disrespected.

BARTISE: Interruption--- Uh-huh.

NANCY: But I think last night, knowing what was going on with, like, you and Raven and stuff. I was so confused. I saw the Raven in the lounge and I'm assuming that Raven was not in the pod. Raven seems to be very, like, playful, but also, she's a little negative.

BARTISE: Umm-hmm.

NANCY: Like, I can, I can't, I'm done, I'm done. Honestly, I was kind of surprised that she was on the top of your list. Raven? Like, I was really taken aback, because we're very different. So, yeah, I, I, that is surprising.

NANCY: Last night Bartise mentioned Raven would definitely be the type of girl that I date, like, body type wise. But the whole point of this is that our foundation was built of, of that emotional connection and Raven emotionally couldn't have been who he wanted and needed.

BARTISE: Me and Raven had a huge, like, connection because we shared, like, everything fitness related and everything and so we connected strongly over that. With me and you was, like, I didn't, when I went to the pod with Raven I knew I'd have to bring the energy and that she'd be kind of trying to match me. But for me and you know, it's just, like, boom, boom, boom.

NANCY: Interruption--- Boom, boom, boom.

BARTISE: We're climbing on each other, we're climbing on each other, you know.

NANCY: Yeah.

BARTISE: And so that's what I fell in love with.

NANCY: Interruption--- Yeah.

BARTISE: I, I, just couldn't get you out of my gut. When I was trying to have a date with Raven, I was just, like, thinking about you. I was, like, "you know what? These girls are completely opposite. Like, what am I'm doing like, what am I sitting here falling in love with two girls and they're just like completely different like this. So that's when I was, like, you know what? I have to end this whole thing with Raven now because Nancy's my number one by far. And, like, that's who I want to continue going on with. Come here.

NANCY: Umm.

ZANAB: Go, like, to safety. No. Go that way, go! Oh! It's the hair.

ALEXA: You look amazing.

NANCY: Let me ask you this.

SK: Yeah.

NANCY: I'm a Scorpio. You're Scorpio.

SK: Okay.

NANCY: So, touchy-feely is, **like**, my world.

SK: Right.

NANCY: I don't know Raven in that aspect.

SK: I think the third or fourth thing she said to me was, "I'm not a very affectionate person". You know.

NANCY: Yeah.

SK: And I kind of knew what I was signing up for, and I told her, that, "hey, I want to fall in love with you the Raven way". **You know**. So, whatever way you wanna be loved is what I'm gonna give to you.

SK: Having that conversation with Raven yesterday helped us open up more. I definitely feel, **like**, we've made a lot of progress and enhance our connection with each other. She's getting a lot more comfortable with me, but at the same time we haven't been intimate with each other. Uh, there's definitely a good amount of healthy sexual attention that's brewing between us. **Like**, sometimes I have to, **like**, wake myself up. **Like**, "OK, OK. Alright. Be a gentleman, **like**, OK". But not having it in the beginning hasn't really changed the way I see her or the way I see our relationship.

ALEXA: How are you? How y'all doing?

RAVEN: Medium at first, but it's better every single day.

ALEXA: Yeah.

COLLEEN: Yeah.

RAVEN: I feel, **like**, all our problem is, **like**, at first all we were doing is having, **like**, realistic conversations and, **like**, just very serious all the time.

COLLEEN: So, now you're letting loose here?

RAVEN: Yeah, now. **Like**, literally, **like**, you know, **like**, just making jokes with each other.

ALEXA: Yeah.

RAVEN: I need to bring the energy. I need to, **like**, really start to open up.

ALEXA: Yeah. It took a moment, **like**, with, **like**, the whole sex thing. It took a moment. Like I was telling you.

RAVEN: Yeah. Yeah.

COLLEEN: Mm-hmm?

ALEXA: It's, **like**, a, like a two minute, **like**, jamming it in. I'm, **like**, what? Hello?

COLLEEN: Hello?

ALEXA: Hello? He's, **like**, "are you OK" and I'm, **like**, "no, I've been telling you". It's been a situation but we're good. We're, we're, very good now. Now I'm, **like**, whoa.

COLLEEN: Yeah.

COLE: Zay! Room for one more!

ZANAB: I'm gonna look like a wet dog if I get on that thing right now. No, I like to sit like cheer you on.

COLE: No.

ZANAB: Can I just, like, preserve what I worked really hard on come on?

SK: The fit, right?

ZANAB: Like, come on! Not all of us look so good really wet like that.

BARTISE: How you doing, Raven?

RAVEN: I'm doing great. How are you?

BARTISE: I'm doing good too. It's good to see you in person now.

RAVEN: I know. Yes, same. It is good to see you.

BARTISE: Raven is a beautiful girl. She's very fit. Great eyes, the hair, the curls. She's just a very gorgeous girl. So, Raven definitely is a head-turner. We did have a connection. Like, I do care. Like, it's, it's you know we, we formed something special in the pods. I still care what, what she might think of me, and I hope that she would care what I think of her because you know we're human beings at the day. We developed something real it's not, like, we developed something real and it's over.

BARTISE: Was it weird? `Cause, like, we had a crazy emotional connection. Was it weird, like, being here talking to me, like, face-to-face now, or is it, like, natural. `Cause we were very comfortable in pods.

RAVEN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

BARTISE: I still feel comfortable talking to you face-to-face.

RAVEN: Interruption--- No, for sure.

BARTISE: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

RAVEN: Yeah, I feel most to you face-to-face. Like...

BARTISE: Interruption--- I mean, honestly, like, I could tell in the pods, like, you told me you get a lot of male attention, or whatever, so I was, like, "OK she probably a baddie".

RAVEN: Yeah.

BARTISE: And then I saw you walk out, and I was, like, "damn, yeah. Fuck. She's a good looking girl."

RAVEN: Yeah.

BARTISE: But, like, this is, like, Love is Blind. It's not about that. So, I was, like, not about that. But I had to bring it up. Give you a compliment. But, yeah.

RAVEN: Thank you, thank you. I appreciate that.

BARTISE: Interruption--- I was, I was very impressed when I saw you in person.

RAVEN: Thank you. I appreciate that.

BARTISE: I was like, "Attagirl. Attagirl." You know, you're killing it, so...

RAVEN: Interruption--- I work out. So, thank you.

BARTISE: I feel like, on paper, we look like this freaking perfect match. Obviously, came down to you, and I came down to...

RAVEN: Interruption--- Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

BARTISE: ...Nancy, right? And I had a connection with Nancy that was very strong in the emotional and, like, fun and like, we could always joke and it was a best friend kind of vibe.

RAVEN: Mm-hmm.

BARTISE: Me and you had a connection where it was like, we're so similar.

RAVEN: Mm-hmm.

BARTISE: We both love fitness, nutrition.

RAVEN: Mm-hmm.

BARTISE: So, it was, like, "damn". Literally, everything we talked about was, like, this is a connection. This is the connection. Similarity.

RAVEN: Interruption--- A similarity.

BARTISE: Right, a similarity.

RAVEN: But, like, I feel like you don't have to go up to girls.

BARTISE: Mm-hmm.

RAVEN: But, like, I'm never going to go up to a guy.

BARTISE: Interruption--- Right, right, right.

RAVEN: So, we would, like, literally probably never talk if we went to a bar.

BARTISE: Right, but I might have approached you. I might have approached you.

RAVEN: The reason why I'm not super flattered by what Bartise is saying is because, like, Bartise never had any compliments for the pod Raven, until now he has compliments for the physical Raven. So, for me it's, like, not flattering at all and I know, like, for some girls that, like, is a big thing they wanna be told they're pretty and of course I wanna feel like my man loves me and thinks I'm beautiful. Um, but I also wanna know that, like, he appreciates, you know, my mind and our connection and how we're growing, and you know how we push each other. And that is not something that Bartise is looking for.

RAVEN: I really feel like we don't have a lot of compatibility...

BARTISE: Interruption--- Yeah.

RAVEN: ...for what we both want in a partner.

BARTISE: Mmm-hmm.

RAVEN: I feel reassured in, like, the way that I want to receive love, and the way that I give it, you know? And I hope that you feel the same way.

BARTISE: Yeah.

RAVEN: We're doing the right thing. Like, I think SK and I definitely are, like, very more, like, methodical people, like, you know, just more realists, like.

BARTISE: Mm-hmm.

RAVEN: He matches my, like, chiller energy. We've all made the right choices for, like, emotionally, the people that we are.

BARTISE: Right. I think we're both happy with where we are now.

RAVEN: Yes. Like, I'm so confident about that.

BARTISE: Yeah.

RAVEN: Yeah. It is Love is Blind, so, like.

BARTISE: We're proving that, then, huh?

RAVEN: Yeah, yeah. Honestly, we are so emotionally incompatible. I don't know what we would say in real life besides, like, "oh I'd like to go to the gym and lift weights". It's like, "I don't know. Do you wanna go to LA Fitness tonight?"

BARTISE: Interruption--- Wanna go work out together?

RAVEN: Interruption--- Yeah, what else would there even be? You know?

BARTISE: I don't know.

RAVEN: I am not interested at all. I'm focused on my man and my life. So, from the bottom of my heart, like, it's not a thing for me.

ALEXA: How are y'all?

COLE: I am just not in the place to be, like, "Oh yeah. Everything's perfect". She's not, she's not first girl I would have pick out in a crowd and said, "I think she's hot." So, physically there is some growing for me to do. I think she is hot now. Because I love her. But like, if you want the truth. That would be my answer.

ALEXA: Yeah.

COLE: It doesn't mean that I don't think she's gorgeous.

ALEXA: Interruption--- Yeah.

COLE: It's different from what my natural...

ALEXA: Interruption--- What your thing is.

COLE: Yeah. Exactly.

COLE: I have feelings for Zay but I'm not like, I'm not head over heels yet.

ALEXA: Yeah.

ALEXA: Um, OK, I'm literally fucking dying. I just felt like that was, like, very weird. Like, 1000 %. Like, but very, like, open about it. Like, literally, I didn't have to like pressure for a conversation.

ALEXA: Yeah.

COLE: I'm not gonna lie and say that's like, "Oh yeah"

ALEXA: Interruption--- Great.

COLE: "Snap. Did it!" Like, "We're good."

ALEXA: She's great.

COLE: Yeah.

ALEXA: Love it! Oh my God, she's amazing.

ALEXA: It's like, a little, like, tea session. Mama gets the tea. I don't even drink tea, I'm a coffee drinker. But I drink it, I get all the tea.

NANCY: She got that sunlight in those brown eyes. Like, ow!

ALEXA: Are y'all the fucking cutest couple here?

SK: Hey.

NANCY: Ah, yes. Yes. Yes. It's a wet Alexa for meme.

ALEXA: Hubby material right there. That's what it is.

NANCY: Baby girl.

RAVEN: I'm, like, high energy in like, in like...

MATT: Interruption--- Yeah.

RAVEN: ...Not a high-strung way, but I'm like, "let's do it". Like, I don't like to take time, like, I walk fast, I'm like, boom, boom, boom. No, like, he's gonna count every step.

MATT: I love that. I love it.

RAVEN: I love it too.

MATT: Interruption--- There's nothing on anybody else's time. You know it's, it's...

RAVEN: Interruption--- It's SK time.

MATT: Interruption--- I fucking love it. I love it though.

RAVEN: It is.

MATT: So, Raven and SK, I think I was a little skeptical at first. I thought that their personalities wouldn't match up. Now they've talked to Raven, I've talked to SK, I feel like opposites attract and they're gonna they're gonna take off.

RAVEN: Matt was forgettable. I didn't even remember that he was a part of this. But now seeing him and Colleen, who's, like, one of my best girls, like, honestly, I might give them number one.

ALEXA: Brennon and I are doing, like, perfect. Like, after, like, talking to everybody and, like, everybody's, like, spilling their tea. Like, we have no tea to spill.

COLE: Brennon, Alexa. Perfect mesh of weirdness.

ALEXA: If it was the competition, we would be, like, number one. But it's not. But we are.

COLE: How are you and Matt?

COLLEEN: I mean, great. You know?

COLE: So, you're ready to get married right now?

COLLEEN: Like, sure. Sign me up.

COLE: That's where Matt's at too, obviously, so.

COLLEEN: Yeah.

COLE: Y'all are getting married clearly.

COLLEEN: So, I'm just, like, going with how I'm feeling.

COLE: Interruption--- Going with how you're feeling. But what about, what you're thinking? Do you have any, like, reservations or like...

COLLEEN: Interruption--- No, not at all! That's why I'm like...

COLE: What he's been telling me is everything's perfect, like, really, is everything really perfect?

COLLEEN: Interruption--- I mean like. No, that's the only thing. That's...

COLE: Interruption--- Come on.

COLLEEN: No, that's the only thing.

COLE: Interruption--- How is that...

COLLEEN: No, that's the only thing, that, like, we haven't come across anything. So, of course that's scary, where's like, when are we gonna find a hurdle? We haven't been in the real world yet. So, I'm not, I'm not naive. Where it's like, shit can happen, so we'll see. But how are you doing?

COLE: What do you wanna know?

COLLEEN: Anything, everything.

COLE: Anything, everything?

COLLEEN: How's Zay? Like, what are your... Do you have reservations?

COLE: Yeah, she... I mean... I fell in love with her in the pods. We have an emotional connection.

COLLEEN: Interruption--- Yeah, for sure.

COLE: She's an amazing girl. But, like, I mean, we do have a physical connection, but it's not, like, like I said, it's not...

COLLEEN: Interruption--- Yeah.

COLE: Like, she wouldn't have been the first girl I picked out of.

COLLEEN: Interruption--- Yeah.

COLE: If I was basing this fully on physical.

COLLEEN: In the real.

COLE: Interruption--- Yeah.

COLLEEN: Who would your initial type be?

COLE: You.

COLLEEN: Really? For sure, it's like, you would be the person who would go to in a bar.

COLE: Interruption--- I'd approach you in a bar. A bar too, by the way.

COLLEEN: Yeah. Yeah.

COLE: We'd approach each other. Are you at all mad at me from the pods? Like.

COLLEEN: Interruption--- No, not at all.

COLE: I, I knew I that I would be physically attracted to you, but I was, like...

COLLEEN: Interruption--- It was hard for you to say no to me. Just a little bit.

COLE: Like, I know you're cute.

COLLEEN: Yeah. It is very interesting.

COLE: I know, it's weird.

COLLEEN: Yes, you'd be someone I'd go for in "the real world".

COLE: Can we get another drink? Uh...

COLE: Colleen is stressful for me, because I like her. Colleen is gorgeous, and I would definitely date her. But I've said yes to Zanab and I've said no to Colleen and I have to trust and respect my gut with that, because I did that for a reason. But Zanab is the girl I emotionally connect with. Colleen's the girl I physically connect with. Where is the in between, you know, and so I'm over here, like, trying to physically fall in love with Zanab and it's tough. I'm already physically in love with Colleen and so it's, like, ha, where is the perfect girl? Hello.

SK: Mmm.

RAVEN: Interruption--- Thank you.

RAVEN: Chakra oil?

SK: All right. Let's do it.

RAVEN: Do you even know where your heart chakra is?

SK: Uh, we'll find out...

RAVEN: Interruption--- Oh my God.

SK: I'll figure it out.

RAVEN: Lube me up. I'm ready. We're testing your massage skills. Some knots...

SK: Interruption--- I give great massages.

RAVEN: OK...Well...

SK: Interruption---FYI

RAVEN: This, now, it's your time to shine.

SK: Comes with the package.

RAVEN: It comes with the SK package?

SK: Just so you know.

RAVEN: OK.

SK: Heart-shaped. Gonna open up your heart...

RAVEN: Interruption---OK.

SK: ... To receive love. To receive SK's love.

RAVEN: Oh, ho, ho! OK.

SK: And then the floodgates are open.

RAVEN: You just, like, feel it opening?

SK: Yeah, the floodgates are...Boom. All right. Piano entertainment. Yeah!

RAVEN: Oh my God. Just pouring everywhere.

SK: Your heart's opening up.

RAVEN: Yeah, I feel it opening.

SK: There you go. That's what I wanna hear.

RAVEN: It's all the love rushing in.

SK: It's working.

RAVEN: It's working.

RAVEN: Yesterday. SK and I talked about him stepping up to the plate and, um, like, bringing more energy. I can tell he's trying maybe it's something he's not super used to. But it makes me wanna try to. I definitely feel sexual tension for sure. Feels Beyoncélicious.

RAVEN: Beginning to see the real you.

SK: Oh yeah?

RAVEN: The real energy God.

SK: Ah, unleashed. Energy God unleashed.

RAVEN: Yeah.

SK: Energy god.

RAVEN: Sophist ratchet.

SK: I don't think you're ready.

RAVEN: Probably not.

SK: You're ready for this.

RAVEN: I don't know. Should we?

SK: Come here.

RAVEN: Yeah, pick me up. Cause I can't swim. Don't go too far though.

SK: Fine.

RAVEN: Don't go too far in the deep end.

SK: And some lyrics you make up. You're a woman of many talents, for sure.

RAVEN: What do you think is one of your, like, hidden, what do you think?

SK: Being the energy God.

RAVEN: It is hidden.

SK: It's not hidden. It's thee. You just gotta be find it.

RAVEN: It's gotta be freed?

SK: You gotta locate it, that's all.

RAVEN: Yeah, well, have I located it?

SK: I think you're pretty close.

RAVEN: I'm clo... Yeah.

SK: Engagement looks good on you.

RAVEN: Thank you.

SK: I feel like it's all coming together for me, you know? Like. Establishing. I like the fact that we started off with the strong emotional connection.

RAVEN: Mm-hmm.

SK: Um, we're pretty much, like, felt each other's, like, hearts. You know, and like, we poured our hearts out to each other.

RAVEN: Mm-hmm.

SK: And I feel like that was very special. And that was a very special place of vulnerability for me.

RAVEN: Same.

SK: And the future looks bright all the time, every time. I think. You know?

RAVEN: Agreed.

SK: Tell me.

RAVEN: Yeah, I feel, like, it's so fun to, like, see us get better every day.

SK: Yeah, I wouldn't want it any other way. I wouldn't want it pressured. I wouldn't want it, like, rushed.

RAVEN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SK: I just wanted it, like, natural, you know?

RAVEN: Which I love about us...

SK: Interruption--- Yeah.

RAVEN: And I do feel, like, you know, I'm falling in love with you, for sure. And I think it's amazing and beautiful and great. I feel, like, I, like, really love you. Like, I feel, like, this can go the distance.

SK: I love you too.

NANCY: Mm. Mm. Mm. (kisses). How was tonight?

BARTISE: It was interesting.

NANCY: You talked to Raven today.

BARTISE: Mm-hmm.

NANCY: How was it talking to her?

BARTISE: Talking to Raven, it was good.

NANCY: Mm-hmm.

BARTISE: And seeing her in, in the flesh, it makes sense. Like, gorgeous girl. I told her this. I was like, "Listen, like, on paper mean you make sense. You're fucking gorgeous. You're fit." Like, we look good to the naked eye. If you were to look at Raven, look at me, and we're at a bar, we're at a restaurant, that would make sense. But if you compare that to me and your relationship, our connection was emotional. Our connection was energetic. Our connection was fun, was easy. We're making connections based on what we're saying not based on who we are physically.

NANCY: Mm-hmm.

BARTISE: Do you think, Raven and SK would say yes?

NANCY: I honestly think they're both gonna say yes.

BARTISE: Yeah. My biggest fear. And this plays into the fact of us falling in love, which we have done. But in my previous relationships. I've fallen in love before. Not in this level. But in my previous relationships that love has fizzled out. And I can't identify a reason for that having happened. It's just, I, I have lost interest in the girl that I was in love with. I feel like it's real.

NANCY: Interruption--- Yeah.

BARTISE: But I'm just worried, that there might be a fizzle out aspect because we need to experience each other more in Dallas not in this beautiful fairy tale.

NANCY: Mm-hmm.

BARTISE: You know what I'm saying? If we held a wedding right here, right now, what do you think the answer would be?

NANCY: Yes.

BARTISE: Yeah.

NANCY: Mm-hmm.

BARTISE: Your answer right now would be yes?

NANCY: Mm-hmm.

BARTISE: Really? Even, even though we've never gone through any challenges?

NANCY: Yes.

BARTISE: Interruption--- You don't know how I handle any conflict.

NANCY: Mm-hmm.

BARTISE: You wanna jump into this as open as we get?

NANCY: Sign me up. I'm good.

BARTISE: Sign you up?

NANCY: Yeah. I just want you.

BARTISE: Mm-hmm.

BRENNON: Cheers to us being in sync. A little bit?

ALEXA: Like, a lot a bit.

BRENNON: Interruption--- Why are you making a face?

ALEXA: Like, a lot a bit.

BRENNON: Oh, like, a lot a bit. Oh, ok. Cheers to us being in sync then. You rolled your eyes again.

ALEXA: Like, we're the fucking best.

BRENNON: Well, yeah. Clearly.

ALEXA: Yeah.

BRENNON: No competition. But...

ALEXA: Interruption--- Like, literally.

BRENNON: Always. You're the best in general.

ALEXA: Am I the best in general?

BRENNON: Yeah. I'm really excited about going home.

ALEXA: Are you? Why?

BRENNON: Just because, like, I'm excited for the next step. We're not in real life right now. We're in a dream.

ALEXA: Defiantly, I feel like this...

BRENNON: Interruption--- And the dreams good to be in.

ALEXA: I don't, like, this is too. I think, like, this was the difficult part. Like, taking you home will just be, like, meeting my family.

BRENNON: Interruption--- Yeah.

ALEXA: Like, that's it.

BRENNON: What is something about home that you might be nervous about?

ALEXA: I'm comfortable with my decision but nobody else, like, understands my decision.

BRENNON: Where you're at.

ALEXA: Yeah, nobody else...

BRENNON: Interruption--- The fact that you got engaged to somebody in nine days.

ALEXA: Yeah.

BRENNON: Yeah. OK. I get that.

ALEXA: I feel like you and I are good. I mean...

BRENNON: Interruption--- I'm here for real.

ALEXA: ...we got through this. I feel like we'll, like, I think we'll get through the family part. I think...

BRENNON: Interruption--- Very easily.

ALEXA: It'll be fine. Yeah.

ALEXA: You make me kind of love you.

BRENNON: Do what?

ALEXA: I kind of love you.

BRENNON: Like a little bit? Scale of, like, one to, like, one-eighth. What are we looking at?

ALEXA: You're a six-eight, babe.

BRENNON: Six-eight?

ALEXA: Like a six-eight.

BRENNON: Hell yeah. That's, like, more than 50%, I think. I'm not...

ALEXA: Interruption--- OK.

BRENNON: ...really good at math. But seems like a lot more than...

ALEXA: Interruption--- It's way more than 50%, babe.

BRENNON: ...way more than a quarter. Yeah. OK, sweet. I'm so fucking sweaty here. I need a towel babe.

ALEXA: Yeah.

BRENNON: It's really cold.

ALEXA: Am I that hot?

BRENNON: You're very hot. You're really hot, girl.

ALEXA: What's your biggest turn on?

BRENNON: Mm. You, girl.

ALEXA: No. But, like, what's your biggest turn-on?

BRENNON: You.

ZANAB: How was your pool party? I had a great time till it came. Till it came down to me and you.

COLE: Was all of this because what I said to you?

ZANAB: Mm-hmm. You came over, you were swimming over, and you're, like, I'm coming over to my girl, something ridiculous. And then I asked you to rate me.

COLE: I was like you're 9 out of 10.

ZANAB: Interruption--- Uh-huh.

COLE: And then you were, like, is there anyone here you, who, you think is a 10 out of 10? I was just like...

ZANAB: Interruption--- Yeah Colleen.

COLE: No, I was like, maybe one person.

ZANAB: No, you said two people.

COLE: Stop.

ZANAB: Raven and Colleen, which, like, I mean, come on, duh. But still though. Super shitty to hear.

COLE: And I gave you a 9 out of 10! Do you realize I give, like, an 80% of the women in the world, like, less than 7? I gave you a 9 out of 10 OK.

ZANAB: A 9 out of 10. Maybe it's my fault. Maybe it's my fault because I asked you to rate me. That's all on me. Those, those are just self-esteem issues babe...

COLE: Interruption--- You...

ZANAB: ...that I have to work through. That's fine. It's fine. I'm good.

ZANAB: It's really crappy to hear that the man you love and the man that you're engaged to is, like, "Oh yeah I'm physically attracted to this girl you're 9 out of 10 but she's a 10 out of 10". I just don't know if other women would receive that better than me. Maybe I'm very irrational, um, but I absolutely hated hearing that.

COLE: I don't like you when you're mad.

ZANAB: It just makes me question a lot about how he feels about me and the relationship we have. Maybe it goes back to my insecurities, but it's just not something that sits well with me at all.

COLE: It's, like, there's always gonna be other girls and all that.

ZANAB: 100%.

COLE: What's gonna matter is that, like, you know that I've chosen you.

ZANAB: Uh-huh.

COLE: I 100% choose you over everyone else. I'm ready to put a ring on your finger...

ZANAB: Interruption--- Right, it's. It's not necessarily over the "everyone else".

COLE: Yeah.

ZANAB: Do you have any desire to build with anyone else?

COLE: No, but I think Colleen's attractive. So is everyone here. So is Brennan. So is SK. Everyone is good looking. Everyone knows Colleen's hot. Shocker. Do I have feelings for her? No. Would I ever marry her? No. Would I marry you? Yes. She's a great looking girl. I can't change that. But I don't have any feelings for her. Like, we don't mix at all conversationally. I don't know what to talk to her about. It's, like, it's just not there.

ZANAB: Got it.

COLE: At all.

ZANAB: Thanks for the honesty. I appreciate it. Not great to hear but...

COLE: Interruption--- Thank you.

ZANAB: ...it is what it is.

COLE: Yeah.

ZANAB: So, question...

COLE: Interruption--- If you think I'm confused about who I'm with, then that's not the case.

ZANAB: Okay.

COLE: I'm not confused...

ZANAB: Interruption--- Okay.

COLE: ...at all about who I'm with.

ZANAB: I agree that it's real. It's very clear, Cole, for me. I don't doubt that there are feelings between us at all. I will be patient as long as there's something to be patient for. I just hope you respect me enough to tell when there's not anymore. And if it's something that isn't not gonna work, then we make that decision that's not what we're gonna do anymore.

COLE: Okay.

ZANAB: Those are my expectations for someone that, **like**, I would love and respect.

COLE: I want this to work.

ZANAB: I wouldn't be here if I didn't think that was, **like**, a thing. But, I just, **like**, with all the unknowns coming up. I'm really scared. I'm fearful I, **like**, figure out it's you and I give absolutely everything I have. And then in four weeks we're just not in the same place. I feel things very deeply. Very, very, deeply. There's a part of me that, **like**, would wish you would just, **like**, just be more... It's not even, **like**, more committed. It's not even...

COLE: Interruption--- **Yeah**.

ZANAB: And **like**, more assure of me.

COLE: Interruption--- More into you only you.

ZANAB: **Like**, no, it's not.

COLE: Interruption--- No, I know what you're saying.

ZANAB: **Like**, it's not even me. **Like**, I just love for you to be, **like**, more on just, **like**, one person then that's it. Because...

COLE: Interruption--- I'm only on you.

ZANAB: But I truly don't.

COLE: Interruption--- What do you want me to say? "**Mm-mm**. No, I don't have eyeballs. No, I don't see anyone else with a nice body and a cute face".

ZANAB: Interruption--- That's okay. If that's the honesty that we'll go with, we'll just keep it moving...

COLE: Interruption--- **Like**, I can do that.

ZANAB: ...in our relationship.

COLE: Do you want me to do that? Is that, do you want me to say, "oh no. You're the only girl I see"

ZANAB: No, I don't, because now, forever, I will always think that's bullshit.

COLE: Good, 'cause it is bullshit.

ZANAB: Interruption--- Anytime that comes out of your mouth.

COLE: Interruption--- Good. That is bullshit. That's bullshit for any guy.

ZANAB: Interruption--- Oh.

COLE: Unless they're married to Kim Kardashian.

ZANAB: Great.

COLE: Interruption--- Who you look like, so we're close.

ZANAB: Mmm.

MATT: How was the little conversation with Cole at the pool party?

COLLEEN: All I said was, "you're a cute guy, and in the real world, sure".

MATT: Mmm. What's the real world?

COLLEEN: In the real world it's. Like, I don't have, like, with Cole, like, I don't even know who that person is. With you, I know who you are.

MATT: Interruption--- Yeah. But you didn't tell him that though, right?

COLLEEN: I did.

MATT: Mm. I've been played before. Alright? I get it, I get it, I get it.

COLLEEN: Interruption--- We didn't for a a moment by any means...

MATT: Interruption--- I'm good, bro. I'm good.

COLLEEN: We didn't. I have so much respect for Zay, and I have...

MATT: Interruption--- Obviously, he doesn't.

COLLEEN: I have, so much respect for you. And I tried. I didn't know what to say, during that conversation.

MATT: It was very easy, just shut it down. It takes two words. That's my man. Three words.

COLLEEN: Interruption--- I did!

MATT: That's my man. "You're attracted to me?"

COLLEEN: Interruption--- You...

MATT: Cool. I'm glad." That's my man. None of the fuckin' girls told me I was attractive, and they were attracted to me and they wanted to be with me.

COLLEEN: Interruption--- Though he...

MATT: And if they did, I would've shut it down and said, "I got my eyes on one girl". I don't give a fuck what you think about me. I got eyes on one girl.

COLLEEN: Yeah. Can I take a minute?

MATT: We have four weeks to get married, and for you to tell people, that they're attractive people, as an engaged woman. He's a cute guy in the real world

COLLEEN: Interruption--- No...

MATT: And whatever happens, happens right?

COLLEEN: No.

MATT: So fuck me, right?

COLLEEN: No.

MATT: You're going to tell me you love me and shit like that, but fuck me right?

COLLEEN: I'm fighting for you.

MATT: What are you talking about? What are you...

COLLEEN: Interruption--- Believe me.

MATT: ...What are you talking about?

COLLEEN: I only got have eyes for you, Matt.

MATT: Girl, what? You're got your eyes on one person. You should...

COLLEEN: Interruption--- I do. I only...

MATT: ...At least. You should have.

COLLEEN: It's not like that.

MATT: Stop. This is fucking ridiculous. But I'm not gonna get fucking played, Colleen.

COLLEEN: You're done?

MATT: I might be.

COLLEEN: No, come on.

COLLEEN: I'm gonna be straight up. I didn't know how to react to that kind of a situation.

MATT: Hold on. Do you hear yourself? You are engaged to me, and you did not know how to respond to somebody telling you that they were attracted to you. That's all I need to hear. I'm gonna tell how I feel, and this is, we're on two different pages.

COLLEEN: No, no, no, please...

MATT: Interruption--- No, it's okay. No, no, no, I'm out.

COLLEEN: ...wait. No, please, please.

MATT: It's very simple. It's very simple.

MATT: Hey, for real. Take this mic off me, man. Take this shit off me. I'm out, bro.

COLLEEN: I don't want him to leave. I'm scared that he's trying to, like, tap out. And I don't wanna lose him. So, I don't care what I have to do, like. Who cares that's people pleasing, like, I don't give a fuck, like. I don't want to lose him, so whatever I have to do, I have to do. Sorry guys. Can you give me a second?

MATT: Should I not be upset at that? If your wife came up to you and said, that some guy told her that she was cute, and then she in turn said that you're cute as well. In the real world if you were to buy me a drink, whatever happens, happens. Would you be upset? Man- to-man, would you be upset?

MATT: You personally. Yeah, you fucking would be. And if I would have done the same thing to one of the girls, I'd be the fucking player that's playing her like a fucking fiddle. And I'm not gonna to get played bud. OK? It's not a game. This is my life. This is my life. If I'm gonna commit to somebody I gotta know that she's with me 100%.

MATT: Eh, I don't know.