

## Gender Differences in Communication Styles Among Santri At Pesantren Al Hikam Burneh, Bangkalan

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### ABSTRACT

*This study investigates how male and female santri at Pesantren Al Hikam Burneh differ in their communication styles, guided by Deborah Tannen's (1991) theory of rapport talk and report talk. The research seeks to answer how gender influences language use in both private and public interactions within the pesantren environment. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through interviews with several male and female santri who actively engage in daily communication. The findings show that female santri tend to express empathy, support, and emotional openness, which align with rapport talk, while male santri often focus on clarity and giving solutions, reflecting report talk. However, the results also reveal differences from Tannen's assumptions; female santri appear more confident in public speaking, and male santri show politeness and restraint influenced by pesantren values. These variations suggest that gendered communication among santri is shaped not only by gender roles but also by religious and cultural norms that promote respect, balance, and harmony.*

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### 1. Introduction

Communication is a fundamental aspect of human interaction that enables people to share ideas, express emotions, and create social bonds. However, the way people communicate is influenced by social factors such as age, culture, education, social status, and especially gender (Du et al., 2025; Rahman & Weda, 2018; Youngsun et al., 2024). Gender significantly shapes how individuals choose their words, participate in conversations, and express agreement or disagreement. According to Tannen (1991) women tend to use language that emphasizes cooperation and empathy, while men generally communicate in a more direct and information-focused manner. These communication patterns reflect not only personal habits but also social and cultural norms that define what is considered appropriate behavior for each gender. Understanding gender differences in communication therefore helps us see how language is used to express who we are, maintain our relationships, and establish our place within society.

As communication is deeply connected to social life, it can be better understood through a sociolinguistic perspective. Sociolinguistics focuses on how language varies and functions within society, showing that people's ways of speaking are influenced by social factors such as class, culture, age, and gender (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015; Weda et al., 2021; Adinda et al., 2025). From this point of view, gendered communication becomes part of sociolinguistic variation, where language not only serves to exchange information but also to reflect social identity, status, and relationships. Thus, understanding gender differences in communication through a sociolinguistic lens helps explain how men and women use language differently because of the social norms and cultural expectations surrounding them.

In relation to gender, the way people communicate often reflects the different social roles and expectations that men and women have in society. Gender strongly influences not just what people say, but also how they say it, including their tone of voice, level of directness, and the purpose behind their words (Gafforov, 2024; Abbas et al., 2024; Muslimat et al., 2025). Tannen (1991) explains that men and women use language differently because they usually have different goals in conversation. Men often focus on showing independence, power, and success, while women tend to focus on building emotional connections, closeness, and support. These differences can be seen in everyday interactions at school, at work, or in casual talks. People learn how to communicate from their environments and educations (Hawley et al., 2023). For example, boys are often taught to speak more directly and competitively, while girls are encouraged to speak politely,

cooperatively, and with empathy. Understanding these patterns helps explain why communication differences between genders keep appearing in many cultures and social groups.

Gendered communication can also be observed in specific cultural settings such as Islamic boarding schools or *pesantren*, where daily interactions are shaped by religious values, discipline, and respect toward teachers (Setiawan et al., 2022). Male *santri* often speak more confidently and take leadership roles, while female *santri* usually communicate more politely and cooperatively, reflecting traditional gender expectations in Indonesian society (Suprpto, 2022). These patterns are especially visible in *Pesantren Al Hikam Burneh*, one of the largest *pesantren* in Bangkalan, Madura. The *pesantren* is known for combining strong Islamic education with the active use of the Madurese language, which represents the community's cultural identity. Both male and female *santri* often use Madurese in daily communication, showing how local culture, religion, and gender norms together shape their ways of speaking.

To better understand these communication differences, this study applies Deborah Tannen's theory of gendered communication styles. Tannen (1991) distinguishes between two general patterns: rapport talk and report talk. According to her, women tend to use rapport talk, which focuses on building relationships, expressing emotions, and maintaining closeness through conversation. Meanwhile, men usually use report talk, which emphasizes sharing information, asserting authority, and maintaining status. These patterns are socially constructed rather than biologically determined, shaped by cultural expectations about how each gender should interact (Ayu et al., 2024). Supporting this view, (Holmes (2013) notes that women's speech often emphasizes politeness and cooperation, whereas men's language tends to reflect power and authority. Together, these perspectives highlight that gendered communication is a product of social learning and reflects broader cultural norms about gender roles.

Previous studies have explored gender differences in communication across educational and religious contexts. Nurhidayah, (2020) found that male *santri* in *pesantren* tend to speak more dominantly and directly, while female *santri* use polite and empathetic language influenced by *pesantren*'s patriarchal culture. Similarly, Tussa'diah et al. (2022) showed that male students preferred direct and humorous language, whereas female students were more expressive and emotional in speech. Damayanti & Putri (2024) also discovered that women used more polite forms, adjectives, and nonverbal cues, while men communicated more straightforwardly. These findings collectively support Tannen (1991) theory that men use report talk focused on status and information, while women use rapport talk aimed at building connection. However, previous studies in *pesantren* mainly emphasized linguistic politeness or general interactional differences, without closely examining how Tannen's concept of report and rapport talk appears in *santri*'s daily communication. Therefore, this study aims to explore gendered communication styles among *santri* through the lens of Tannen's theory within the *pesantren* environment.

Based on the discussion above, this study aims to explore how gender differences influence communication styles among *santri* at *Pesantren Al Hikam Burneh*. Specifically, it focuses on how male and female *santri* differ in their use of rapport talk and report talk, particularly in the aspects of private vs. public speaking and status vs. support as proposed by Tannen (1991). By examining these two aspects, this research seeks to reveal how gender roles are reflected in daily communication within a *pesantren* context, where religious values and social expectations intersect. The findings are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of gendered communication in Islamic educational settings and to provide insights for educators and policymakers to promote more inclusive and balanced communication practices.

## 1.1 Literature Review

### a. Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is the study of how language interacts with society, culture, and identity. It explores how people use language differently depending on social factors such as gender, class, age, and context (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015). According to Holmes (2013), language serves as a reflection of social relationships and group membership, meaning that how individuals speak is often shaped by the social norms and expectations of their communities. In the *pesantren* context, language is not only a means of communication but also a marker of religious identity and social hierarchy. Previous research indicates that *pesantren* environments in Indonesia, including those in Madura, create unique sociolinguistic spaces where local and religious languages interact (Effendy et al., 2022). *Santri* often switch between languages such as Arabic for religious purposes, *Bahasa Indonesia* for formal communication, and local languages like Madurese for daily interactions (Heriyanto Nurcahyo et al., 2023). This multilingual context shapes distinctive communication patterns influenced by age, gender, and religious roles. Thus, sociolinguistics provides the foundation for understanding how language behavior within *pesantren* reflects broader social structures and relationships.

## b. Gender and Communication Styles

Gender is one of the most important sociolinguistic variables influencing communication. It refers to socially constructed roles and expectations that affect how men and women use and interpret language (Coates, 2015). Research shows that male and female speakers often differ in their communicative goals, linguistic choices, and conversational styles (Holmes, 2013; Abbas et al., 2023). Tannen (1991) framework of rapport talk and report talk explains these differences: women tend to use language for building relationships (rapport talk), while men often use it to convey information or assert status (report talk). Tannen (1991) identifies several aspects of gendered communication that distinguish male and female speech patterns. However, this study focuses on two of the most socially relevant dimensions “status vs. support” and “public vs. private” as they closely relate to everyday social interaction. These aspects illustrate how men often communicate to establish status or authority, while women tend to use language to offer emotional support and build interpersonal connections.

## 2. Methodology

This study used a qualitative descriptive approach to explore gender differences in communication styles among *santri* at *Pesantren Al Hikam Burneh*. This method was chosen to provide a detailed understanding of how male and female *santri* express themselves in real social interactions. Several participants were selected by the *pesantren* administrators based on their active involvement in daily communication. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted individually in a relaxed and private setting to encourage openness. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically to identify patterns related to gendered communication. The analysis explored how Tannen's (1991) framework of rapport and report talk explains the different ways male and female *santri* communicate in daily interactions.

## 3. Results and Discussion

In this section, the findings and discussion are divided into two main parts. The first part discusses Private vs Public Speaking, which focuses on how male and female *santri* express themselves in different communication settings. The second part discusses Status vs Support, which explores how they position themselves in conversations involving emotional and social interaction.

### 3.1 Privat vs Public Speaking

This section briefly explains how male and female *santri* communicate in private and public situations. The table below summarizes the main patterns of speaking preferences, participation in public forums, language use, and activeness in public communication among *santri*. This overview helps readers understand the general differences before the interview data are discussed in detail.

**Table 1. Gender Differences in Private and Public Speaking among Santri**

Question	Pattern by Gender
Preferred Setting for Speaking	Female <i>santri</i> prefer private conversations for comfort and closeness, while male <i>santri</i> also prefer private talks but aspire to be confident in public speaking.
Participation in Public Forums	Female <i>santri</i> tend to listen and hesitate to speak, while male <i>santri</i> speak only when necessary or when they disagree.
Language Use in Different Contexts	Both genders adjust their speech according to formality and situation; females show more concern for politeness, while males focus on appropriateness.
Activeness in Public Communication	Female <i>santri</i> appear more active in public speaking activities, while male <i>santri</i> are more reserved.
Rules or Encouragement in <i>Pesantren</i>	Both genders feel encouraged to speak publicly due to <i>pesantren</i> programs like <i>muhadloroh</i> that train confidence and fluency.

Based on the table above, this theme is further explained through five interview questions that explore how male and female *santri* express themselves in both private and public communication. Each question highlights different aspects

of their speaking preferences, participation, and language use. The following discussion presents the questions, participants' responses, and how these reflect gendered communication patterns according to Tannen's (1991) theory.

**Question 1:**

Question	Answer	
	M1	F1
<p>"Kamu lebih suka ngomong di mana sih, di depan umum kayak pas pengajian atau diskusi, atau ngobrol santai aja sama teman di kamar?" ("Do you prefer speaking in public, such as during sermons or discussions, or having casual conversations with friends in your room?")</p>	<p>"Kalau menurut saya si lebih suka privat ya mba, karena kan kalau privat itu kan kita berinteraksinya gak butuh banyak orang, karena kalau sama 1/2 orang tuh kan lebih leluasa." ("I prefer private conversations because interacting with one or two people feels more comfortable and open.")</p>	<p>"Jelas lebih suka ngobrol sama temen karena bisa lebih terbuka, tapi kalau bisa ya pengen bagus public speakingnya, pengen belajar, dan kalau ada kesempatan pasti mau bicara di depan umum." ("I prefer talking privately with friends because it feels more open, but I also want to improve my public speaking and would like to speak in public if given the chance.")</p>

Female *santri*'s preference for private communication reflects their focus on emotional safety and comfort, which Tannen (1991) identifies as a form of rapport talk. This communication style emphasizes building understanding and connection rather than performance. Meanwhile, the male *santri*'s response shows a desire to use language as a means of achievement and self-presentation traits associated with *report talk*.

From Tannen's viewpoint, these differences reflect distinct communication goals: women use talk to create bonds, while men use it to express independence and capability. In the *pesantren* environment, these patterns are reinforced by cultural expectations that associate modesty with femininity and confidence with masculinity.

**Question 2:**

Question	Answer	
	M3	F2
<p>"Kalau kamu di forum umum, misalnya pas ngaji bareng atau musyawarah, kamu sering ikut ngomong atau lebih sering dengerin aja?" ("In public forums, such as study sessions or meetings, do you usually speak up or just listen?")</p>	<p>"Kalau menurut saya ya tergantung pembahasannya kak, kalau menurut saya tidak sesuai ya saya harus ngomong, kalau sudah sesuai ya diam saja." ("It depends on the topic. If I think something is wrong, I will speak up; if it's fine, I stay quiet.")</p>	<p>"Lebih sering dengerin aja kak, kadang tu pengen ngasih pendapat cuman gatau cara bilangannya tuh gimana." ("I usually just listen. Sometimes I want to share my opinion but don't know how to say it properly.")</p>

Female *santri*'s hesitation to speak in public reflects their tendency to avoid confrontation or mistakes, which Tannen (1991) views as a feature of rapport talk. In her theory, women often aim to maintain harmony and prevent tension in conversation, even if it means staying silent. Male *santri*, however, express a pragmatic and goal-oriented approach: they speak only when necessary, consistent with *report talk*, where conversation serves a purpose to correct, clarify, or share information.

Tannen would interpret this as a reflection of differing *interactional purposes*: women use language for connection, men for action. Within the *pesantren*'s disciplined environment, both styles are socially accepted, showing that gendered communication coexists within shared norms of respect.

Question 3:

Question	Answer	
	M2	F3
<p>"Kamu ngerasa cara ngomongmu di kelas atau pengajian beda gak sama kalau ngobrol santai di kamar?" ("Do you think your way of speaking in class or during religious sessions is different from how you talk casually with friends?")</p>	<p>"Kalau di kelas tu lebih formal, biasanya guru juga 60% pakai bahasa Indonesia, sisanya pakai bahasa Madura. Tapi bahasa Madura juga kan ada tingkatannya." ("In class, the language is more formal. Teachers use about 60% Indonesian and the rest Madurese, which also has different levels of politeness.")</p>	<p>"Beda kak, dari bahasanya kan kalau sama temen kan bahasanya terserah campur-campur, sedangkan kalau di umum kan harus bahasa yang sopan. Kalau ke teman pakai bahasa Madura yang kasar sedangkan kalau ke guru/ustadz itu pakai yang sopan (engghi bhunten)." ("It's different. When I talk with friends, the language is mixed and casual, but in public I have to speak politely. I use rough Madurese with friends and polite Madurese with teachers.")</p>

Both male and female *santri* demonstrate sociolinguistic awareness through adjusting speech levels and tone according to context. Tannen (1991) argues that such adaptations reflect how language functions relationally not just to convey information, but to express social awareness and respect. For female *santri*, politeness and linguistic sensitivity highlight rapport talk, showing care in maintaining relationships. For male *santri*, formality and structure emphasize report talk, reflecting an awareness of hierarchy and appropriateness.

Tannen would interpret these findings as a demonstration that gendered communication differences are socially constructed and context-sensitive, especially in a *pesantren* where politeness is a key indicator of moral and religious discipline.

Question 4:

Question	Answer	
	M4	F4
<p>"Kalau di pesantren ini, kamu lihat santri laki-laki dan perempuan sama-sama aktif ngomong di depan umum gak?" ("In this pesantren, do you think male and female <i>santri</i> are equally active in speaking in public?")</p>	<p>"Kalau di sini lebih aktif santri putri, mayoritas santri putra di sini tuh lebih malu daripada santri putri. Tapi menurut saya hal itu tidak wajar sih, kak, karena menurut saya laki-laki itu harusnya lebih berani. Tapi seiring zaman hal itu berubah, kak." "Here, the female students are more active. Most male students are more shy than females. But I think that's not how it should be, because men are supposed to be braver — though I realize that times have changed.")</p>	<p>"Kalau menurut saya si perempuan lebih aktif, soalnya banyak juga yang ikut lomba pidato atau tampil pas muhadloroh, jadi kelihatan berani." ("I think the female students are more active because many of them join speech contests or perform during <i>muhadloroh</i>, so they seem braver.")</p>

Both participants agree that female *santri* are more active in public speaking, which contrasts with traditional assumptions that men are more dominant in public discourse. According to Tannen (1991), rapport talk is generally associated with private and supportive communication, yet in this case, female *santri* extend rapport talk into public contexts as a means of participation and encouragement rather than competition. The male *santri*'s reflection adds a

sociocultural layer to this pattern, he recognizes a shift in gender norms, where women are becoming more voiced while men tend to be reserved.

Tannen would interpret this as a transformation in how gender roles influence language: female communication is no longer confined to the private sphere but adapts to modern expectations of confidence and expression. This indicates that in the *pesantren* environment, rapport talk and report talk are not fixed categories but evolving practices shaped by changing perceptions of gender and courage.

**Question 5:**

Question	Answer	
	M5	F5
“Ada gak aturan atau kebiasaan di pesantren yang bikin kamu merasa terbatas atau malah didorong buat ngomong di depan umum?” (“Are there any rules or traditions in the pesantren that make you feel restricted or encouraged to speak in public?”)	“Ya kalau saya sih ngerasa didorong juga, apalagi kalau ada acara, biasanya ditunjuk buat jadi MC atau baca ayat. Jadi mau gak mau harus berani ngomong.” (“I also feel encouraged, especially during events when I’m chosen to be an MC or read verses. So, like it or not, I have to be brave to speak.”)	“Gak ada larangan sih kak, malah disuruh aktif ngomong pas muhadloroh itu, biar bisa percaya diri.” (“There’s no restriction; we’re actually encouraged to speak during muhadloroh so we can be more confident.”)

Both male and female participants describe the *pesantren* environment as supportive of public speaking. This encouragement reduces the typical gender gap in communication behavior. According to Tannen (1991), men usually dominate report talk contexts because public speaking is associated with authority and information delivery. However, in this setting, both genders are equally motivated to participate in speech-based activities, blurring the distinction between rapport and report talk.

Tannen would likely view this as an example of contextual influence on gendered communication. The *pesantren’s* emphasis on moral development, confidence, and respectful expression allows both men and women to use talk as a tool for growth and spiritual learning. Female *santri* engage in public communication not to challenge hierarchy, but to connect and inspire others (*rapport*), while male *santri* approach it as responsibility and performance (report). This shared participation highlights how institutional values can reshape gendered speech patterns in educational communities.

**3.2 Status vs Support**

This section explains how male and female *santri* communicate in situations related to support and social status. The table below summarizes the main patterns in how *santri* give and receive support, respond to problems, seek help, and view status in conversation. This overview helps readers understand the general differences before the interview findings are discussed in more detail.

**Table 2. Gender Differences in Status and Support in Santri Communication**

Question	Pattern by Gender
Comfort in Giving or Receiving Support	Female <i>santri</i> show more emotional openness when supporting friends, while male <i>santri</i> prefer practical advice and avoid discussing personal feelings.
Reaction to Friends’ Problems	Female <i>santri</i> respond with empathy and shared feelings, while male <i>santri</i> focus on offering logical solutions or encouragement.
Seeking Help from Others	Female <i>santri</i> often seek emotional reassurance, while male <i>santri</i> tend to rely on themselves or seek help only when necessary.
Perception of Status in Conversation	Female <i>santri</i> value equality and balance in communication, while male <i>santri</i> acknowledge subtle hierarchy based on age or role.

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View on Communication Style Differences	Both genders recognize differences: women are described as softer and more detailed, while men are more direct and brief.
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Based on the table above, this theme is elaborated through five interview questions that explore how male and female santri position themselves in conversations related to emotional support and social status. Each question focuses on different aspects, such as how they give or receive support, respond to others' problems, and perceive hierarchy in communication. The following discussion presents the questions, participants' responses, and how these reflect gendered interaction patterns in light of Tannen's (1991) theory of rapport talk and report talk.

**Question 1:**

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Question	Answer	
	M1	F1
<p>"Kalau ada teman yang curhat atau lagi sedih, kamu biasanya gimana nanggapinya?" ("When a friend shares a problem or feels sad, how do you usually respond?")</p>	<p>"Biasanya saya kasih saran aja, kalau ada solusi ya bilang. Kalau gak ada ya paling nyemangatin aja biar gak terlalu dipikir." ("Usually I give advice; if there's a solution, I tell them. If not, I just encourage them not to overthink.")</p>	<p>"Kalau teman curhat, ya saya dengerin dulu. Kadang gak usah dijawab juga dia udah lega, soalnya butuh tempat cerita aja." ("When a friend shares their problem, I just listen first. Sometimes they already feel better without needing an answer, they just need someone to listen.")</p>

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Female *santri* show empathy and prioritize emotional connection, consistent with Tannen's (1991) rapport talk, where conversation functions to strengthen bonds and provide emotional comfort. Male *santri*, on the other hand, use talk as a tool to solve problems and give direction reflecting report talk.

Tannen would interpret these tendencies as two ways of showing care: women use *listening* as support, men use *advice* as support. In *pesantren* life, both are valuable because they represent care in different forms empathy and responsibility.

**Question 2:**

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Question	Answer	
	M2	F2
<p>"Kalau kamu sendiri lagi punya masalah, kamu lebih suka cerita ke teman atau disimpan sendiri?" ("When you have a problem, do you prefer sharing it with friends or keeping it to yourself?")</p>	<p>"Kalau saya lebih suka simpen sendiri dulu, kalau udah parah baru cerita ke teman, itu pun cuma buat minta saran." ("I prefer to keep it to myself first; I'll tell a friend only if it gets serious, usually just to ask for advice.")</p>	<p>"Biasanya cerita ke teman dekat aja, biar lega. Kadang cuma pengen didengar aja, gak minta solusi juga gak apa-apa." ("Usually, I share it with close friends to feel relieved. Sometimes I just want to be heard; I don't need a solution.")</p>

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Female *santri*'s comfort in sharing problems reinforces the rapport talk principle communication as emotional release and relational maintenance. Male *santri*'s hesitation to share aligns with report talk, where revealing personal issues may threaten autonomy or status.

Tannen would see this as a difference in conversational purpose: for women, speaking creates connection; for men, speaking implies vulnerability. However, *pesantren* culture's emphasis on humility softens this difference, as both genders are encouraged to express themselves responsibly.

Question 3:

Question	Answer	
	M3	F3
<p>"Kalau ngobrol sama teman, kamu ngerasa semua orang setara gak, atau ada yang lebih dominan karena status (misalnya senior atau pengurus)?" ("When talking with friends, do you feel everyone is equal, or do some people seem more dominant because of their status (like seniors or student leaders)?")</p>	<p>"Ya tetap sopan kalau sama pengurus, tapi gak sampai ngerasa beda jauh. Biasanya kalau ngomong tetap santai aja, asal gak kelewatan." ("We stay polite when talking to leaders, but it doesn't feel like a big difference. We still speak casually as long as it's respectful.")</p>	<p>"Kalau di kamar sih setara aja kak, tapi kalau sama pengurus ya pasti lebih sopan dan gak bisa seenaknya ngomong." ("In the dorm room, we're all equal, but with student leaders, of course, we speak more politely and can't talk too casually.")</p>

Both male and female *santri* recognize the role of hierarchy, but females emphasize politeness and restraint more strongly. Tannen (1991) associates this sensitivity with rapport talk, as women manage relationships through linguistic politeness. Male *santri*'s response reflects report talk focusing on the function of speech (staying respectful) rather than emotional tone.

Tannen would interpret this as two expressions of the same cultural value: respect. In *pesantren* context, status is respected not through dominance, but through balanced and courteous speech.

Question 4:

Question	Answer	
	M4	F4
<p>"Menurut kamu, gaya komunikasi santri laki-laki sama perempuan itu beda gak?" ("Do you think the communication style of male and female <i>santri</i> is different?")</p>	<p>"Kalau cowok biasanya to the point aja, gak suka muter-muter, langsung intinya." ("Boys usually go straight to the point; we don't like going around the topic.")</p>	<p>"Beda sih kak, perempuan tuh biasanya ngomongnya halus, terus suka cerita panjang biar jelas." ("Yes, it's different. Female students usually speak softly and tell longer stories to make things clear.")</p>

This contrast directly mirrors Tannen's (1991) observation that women prefer elaboration and emotional clarity (rapport talk), while men favor brevity and structure (report talk).

Tannen would argue that these differences arise not from ability but from social purpose: women seek connection, men seek clarity. In *pesantren* interactions, both styles complement each other, female *santri* ensure understanding, while male *santri* maintain efficiency.

Question 5:

Question	Answer	
	M5	F5
<p>"Kalau ngobrol sama lawan jenis, kamu ngerasa harus beda cara ngomong gak dibanding kalau sama sesama jenis?" ("When talking with the opposite gender, do you feel you have to change your way of speaking compared to when you talk with the same gender?")</p>	<p>"Iya sih, kalau sama cewek ngomongnya juga lebih sopan aja, soalnya takut salah paham." ("Yes, I also speak more politely with girls because I don't want to be misunderstood.")</p>	<p>"Iya kak, soalnya kalau sama cowok harus lebih hati-hati, takut dikira genit atau gak sopan." ("Yes, because when talking with boys, I have to be more careful so they don't think I'm being flirtatious or impolite.")</p>

Both genders adjust their communication style when talking with the opposite sex, showing cultural sensitivity to boundaries and perceptions. Tannen (1991) would view this as cross-gender communication accommodation, where both sides unconsciously adjust to maintain harmony. In this context, female *santri*'s caution shows rapport talk's focus on relational safety, while male *santri*'s politeness reflects report talk's awareness of social appropriateness.

Tannen's theory thus helps explain that communication differences between genders are not conflicts but complementary adaptations especially visible in *pesantren* environments that prioritize respect and moral behavior.

### 3.3 Discussions

This section discusses the findings by looking at how gendered communication among *santri* is shaped not only by gender differences, but also by the *pesantren* environment. The results suggest that communication styles are not fixed patterns that belong to men or women, but flexible ways of speaking that develop through daily interaction, shared values, and institutional practices. In this context, gendered communication reflects how *santri* learn to balance expression, respect, and responsibility in their social life.

In the aspect of private and public speaking, the findings show that female *santri* are actively involved in public communication. Although rapport talk is often associated with private and supportive interaction, in the *pesantren* context it also appears in public speaking activities. Female *santri* use public communication as a way to express ideas, encourage peers, and build confidence, rather than to show dominance. Male *santri*, in contrast, tend to speak in public only when they feel it is necessary. This more reserved behavior reflects careful self-control and awareness of context, which are important values in *pesantren* life. Public speaking, therefore, is not seen as a space for competition, but as a responsibility that requires appropriate timing and purpose.

Regarding status and support, the findings show clear differences in how male and female *santri* respond to personal problems and emotional situations. Female *santri* tend to focus on listening, showing empathy, and creating emotional comfort. Their communication emphasizes closeness and emotional understanding. Male *santri*, on the other hand, usually respond by offering advice, suggestions, or practical solutions. Rather than expressing emotions verbally, they show care through guidance and encouragement. These different styles do not suggest inequality or distance. Instead, they complement each other and help maintain balance in social relationships among *santri*.

Another important aspect revealed in this discussion is the strong influence of politeness and moral values on communication. Both male and female *santri* adjust their language based on the situation, the person they are speaking to, and the social setting. This adjustment is especially visible in cross-gender communication, where careful word choice and tone are used to avoid misunderstanding and maintain respect. Such communicative behavior shows that *pesantren* life emphasizes harmony, modesty, and social responsibility rather than assertiveness or power.

Overall, this discussion shows that rapport talk and report talk function as adaptable communication styles rather than rigid gender categories. In the *pesantren* context, these styles are reshaped by religious values, daily discipline, and shared expectations of respectful behavior. As a result, gendered communication among *santri* reflects a dynamic interaction between gender roles and the social environment in which communication takes place.

### 4. Conclusion

This study examined how male and female *santri* at *Pesantren Al Hikam Burneh* use language in their daily communication. The findings show that gendered communication among *santri* does not always follow common gender patterns, as it is strongly shaped by *pesantren* values. Female *santri* tend to use empathetic and supportive language while also being confident in public communication. Male *santri* generally communicate in a careful and polite manner, balancing confidence with humility. These patterns indicate that communication among *santri* reflects the interaction between gender roles and the moral and social values of the *pesantren*.

Based on these findings, future research is suggested to explore gendered communication in other *pesantren* or Islamic educational settings to see whether similar patterns appear in different contexts. It is also recommended that future studies use more natural communication data, such as classroom interactions or group discussions, to gain a deeper understanding of how gender, culture, and religious values influence everyday communication.

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