

The Language of Jacinda Ardern – A Woman Politician

Anna Majer, University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland

Abstract

Jacinda Ardern – a social democrat, a progressive, a republican, and a feminist, as she delineates herself – is a prominent politician who has been serving as the Prime Minister of New Zealand since 2017. Contemporaneously, she has also been the leader of the Labour Party, which position she assumed after, first, being unanimously elected as deputy leader of the party and soon afterwards being chosen unopposed as the party's standard-bearer. The present paper explores the discourse of this female leader, particularly in terms of the features of men's and women's language. The author's primary interest is whether Ardern's public utterances manifest more womanlike or manlike characteristics and manner of speech in a persistently male-dominated political context. The peculiar case of Jacinda Ardern's discourse seems to be all the more riveting because this female politician has been increasingly successful in implementing social, political, and economic measures (including her response to the Covid-19 pandemic) on the one hand, and her leadership style has received positive coverage from international media commentators, who refer to the phenomenon of Jacinda Ardern as "Jacindamania," on the other. In this study, the specificity of Ardern's speech and the way she communicates are assumed to constitute a substantial part of her female political leadership, and the linguistic research into this area has been conducted primarily with the theoretical background in political discourse (van Dijk 1997, Fairclough & Fairclough 2012) and the language of men and women (Lakoff 1972, Tannen 1994, Mulac, Bradac, Gibbons 2001, Weatherall 2002, Coats 2003).

Keywords: *political discourse, men's and women's language, Jacinda Ardern, female leadership, politician celebrity.*

1. Introduction

"Celebrity politics,"¹ "Jacindamania,"² "the Jacinda effect,"³ "a political influencer,"⁴ "the Facebook prime minister,"⁵ "Jacinda Ardern – the celebrity,"⁶ "Jacindamania goes global"⁷ – to name but a few references to the phenomenon of Jacinda Ardern and her leadership style, which inscribes into what has recently become a worldwide trend oscillating on the verge of politics and mass media, and thus posing a research problem for representatives of various disciplines within humanities and social, cultural and political sciences, including studies of interdisciplinary and discursive nature (Loeb 2017; Marsh, 't Hart and Tindall 2010; 't Hart and Tindall 2009; Street 2005; Street 2004; West and Orman 2003).

Jacinda Ardern is a politician in the first place. However, the channels of communication which she happens to make use of certainly allow classifying her as politician celebrity. Simultaneously, her political leadership takes place in male-dominated institutional environment. All the more so does Ardern's language seem worth analysing in terms of its specificity. In the still stereotypically male-dominated political arena, this charismatic woman politician and leader has been magnetising New Zealand's voters and the public all over the world. It is assumed in this study that the manner in which Ardern communicates constitutes

a substantial part of her female political leadership. Therefore, this paper aims to enquire into Ardern's discourse in terms of men's and women's language features manifestations within political context.

2. Political discourse in the era of celebrity politics

As a relatively new trend and a late modernity phenomenon, celebrity politics may be considered from different perspectives: it embraces celebrities who enter the political scene, politicians who make use of others' celebrity glamour and influence, and politicians who "have acquired" a sort of celebrity image due to their actions. Marsh, 't Hart and Tindall (2010: 6) provide a typology concerning the categories of operators on the politics-celebrity interface, with reference to their conventional origin sphere, which may be either of celebrity or political character, and the nature of their relationship with the other one. The categories are as follows:

- (1) Celebrity advocate
- (2) Celebrity activist/endorser
- (3) Celebrity politician
- (4) Politician celebrity
- (5) Politician who uses others' celebrity

The first three categories of operators have celebrity origin, whereas the latter two – political. *Celebrity advocates* are high-visibility figures who emanate from non-political spheres, such as entertainment, sport, science, journalism, and whose behaviour is minded to set a political agenda and/or is of policy-seeking nature. *Celebrity activists/endorsers* have the same traditionally non-political origin and are highly distinguishable figures, who offer to publicly and/or financially support a particular politician and/or political party. *Celebrity politicians* are high-visibility figures who do not come from political spheres but enter legislative or executive offices substantially related to political activity. The term *politician celebrity*, on the other hand, refers to an "office holder whose public behaviour, private life or association with celebrities alters his own public persona beyond the traditional political sphere into the celebrity sphere (by intent or by accident/scandal)" (Marsh, 't Hart and Tindall 2010: 6). A *politician who uses others' celebrity* is also an office holder in the first place, but they take advantage of particular celebrities and high-visibility figures' fame and recognition in order to endorse themselves, their candidature to an office, their party or policies.

Jacinda Ardern may be described as a politician celebrity. She has been involved in politics since very young age and has a diversified political portfolio. At the age of 17, Ardern joined the Labour Party, which officially marked the beginning of her political career. After graduation in Communication Studies, she became a researcher in Phil Goff's office, which led her to a position on the staff of PM Helen Clark, whom Ardern considers to be her political mentor. Then, Ardern got two-and-a-half-year overseas experience in the cabinet office of British PM Tony Blair, after which, in 2007, she was elected president of the International Union of Socialist Youth. At the age of 28, Ardern entered the House of Representatives, and in 2017 she began a sprint towards the PM office: in August 2017, Ardern was chosen as the leader of the New Zealand's Labour Party, and soon afterwards, in October 2017, her charisma and natural, down-to-earth charm energised voters and

guaranteed her the PM position. Three years later, in October 2020, Ardern was re-elected for a second term as New Zealand's prime minister (Jacinda Ardern n.d.).

The same charm has magnetised the public and media all over the world. As *Britannica* reports (Jacinda Ardern n.d.), Ardern gained the celebrity characteristics and more media coverage after an increase in her political prominence, but also after the details of her personal life became known.

From the sociolinguistic perspective, especially in terms of this paper, one more aspect seems to be of particular importance in the abovementioned phenomenon, i.e. the channels and manner of communication, which may expand beyond the typically political contexts and genres. However, since this study intends to follow the assumptions of political discourse analysis, to ensure the political discourse ground, a few requirements must be met. Therefore, Jacinda Ardern – a woman politician, has been chosen as a political actor. Also, the genre of political speech as political text for analysis has been decided on, together with its political functions and implications. Having ensured these variables, the context will inevitably be political.

To support the research assumptions concerning political discourse, van Dijk's (1997: 12-15) approach may be cited: political discourse may be identified by "all participants in the political process" (its actors/authors, such as politicians, but also individuals (and groups of), citizens, voters, their organisations and institutions, taking active part in political discourse). Another indicator of political discourse may be "the nature of the *activities* or *practices* being accomplished by political text and talk rather than only the nature or its participants." Such political actions and practices are simultaneously discursive practices, and "forms of text and talk in such cases have political functions and implications." Last but not least, another delimiting factor is "the whole *context* as decisive for the categorisation of discourse as 'political' or not" (van Dijk 1997: 12-15; *italics* in the original text). Fairclough (2012: 17-18) also acknowledges that political discourse is "attached to political *actors* – individuals (politicians, citizens), political institutions and organisations, engaged in political *processes* and *events* – and [...] *context* is essential to the understanding of political discourse" (*italics* in the original text). Fairclough (2012: 17-18) further claims that "outside political context, the discourse of politicians or any other 'political actors' is not 'political'." The reason for this is that political contexts are essentially institutional contexts – they "make it possible for actors to exert their agency and empower them to act on the world in a way that has an impact on matters of common concern." Chilton (2004: 6), on the other hand, emphasises the importance of language, communication and discourse within political context, especially in terms of its indicative and persuasive dimension: "[w]hat is clear is that political activity does not exist without the use of language. It is true [...] that other behaviours are involved and, in particular, physical coercion. But the doing of politics is predominantly constituted in language."

3. Political discourse and gender

The discourse of Jacinda Ardern as a woman politician and a woman leader seems to be worth analysing, especially in relation to the traditionally male-dominated political context. Although there has been loads of research in women's and men's language (some representatives are Coats 2003; Holmes and Stubbe 2003; Weatherall 2002; Mulac, Bradac and Gibbons 2001; Crawford 1997; Tannen 1994; Lakoff 1972), it is extremely difficult to

unequivocally acknowledge if a person's language is predominantly male or female, all the more so because a number of external factors may contribute to its specificity, e.g. genre, type of communicative event or situational context. It is possible, however, to observe the manifestations of women's and men's language features and the extent to which they prevail in one's utterances.

This study assumes that Jacinda Ardern's language constitutes substantial part of her political leadership. Therefore, its main interest is the extent to which her language, as represented in her political speeches, evinces sets of linguistic features correlating to the conventionally male and female paradigm.

3.1 Gender and leadership

Interestingly, in terms of management and leadership, thanks to their female nature and qualities, women gain advantage over men and appear to be better suited for managerial positions and leadership. As Baskiewicz (2013: 35) claims, in the theory of management, leadership and business studies, women's characteristics are more consistent with the model profile of a manager or leader in institutional and business settings than men's. According to Baskiewicz (2013), women gain advantage thanks to their interpersonal skills in the first place. They are more likely and more willing to share knowledge, to delegate duties, to trigger creative work and to implement mentoring or coaching. They cooperate rather than compete and attach less importance to hierarchy, competition for power or gaining exclusive dominance in the organisation. Women do not refrain from counselling or more informal information exchanges. Their management may be generally characterised by cooperation, collaboration and partnership within their professional team.

The theory of leadership offers a classification into three types of leaders: *transformational*, *transactional*, and *laissez faire* (Eagly and Carli 2019; Carli 2018). As Eagly and Carli (2019) explain,

Transformational leaders establish themselves as role models by gaining followers' trust and confidence. They state future goals, develop plans to achieve those goals, and innovate, even when their organisations are generally successful. Such leaders mentor and empower followers, encouraging them to develop their full potential and thus to contribute more effectively to their organisations. By contrast, transactional leaders establish give-and-take relationships that appeal to subordinates' self-interest. Such leaders manage in the conventional manner of clarifying subordinates' responsibilities, rewarding them for meeting objectives, and correcting them for failing to meet objectives.

Transformational and transactional leadership styles may be different, but most leaders, no matter if male or female, adopt at least some characteristics from both types. The last category essentially refers to non-leadership, since it is characterised by none of the above criteria except rank authority.

Eagly and Carli (2019) further conclude that women are more likely to fall into the category of transformational leaders, especially in terms of providing support, encouragement, or rewarding to their subordinates, whereas men tend to exceed women on some aspects of transactional leadership, especially in terms of actions of corrective and disciplinary character. They are also more likely to fall into the third category of *laissez faire*

leaders, who refrain from taking responsibility for managing their subordinates. All in all, women appear to be more effective and better suited for leading a modern organisation. If so, it becomes even more noteworthy if (and if yes, how) it is reflected in a leader's language, if, and to what extent, it correlates with the typically men's or women's language features.

3.2 Men's and women's language

The issue of gender and language provides ground for interdisciplinary studies, just as political discourse does. As Tannen (1994: 4) claims, researchers investigating this field "have their roots in wildly divergent academic disciplines, including sociology, education, anthropology, psychology, speech communication, literature, and women's studies [...]." Tannen's (1994: 10) claim that social relations as dominance and subordination happen to be constructed in interaction, constitutes a foundation and contribution to the analysis of talk from the interactional sociolinguistic perspective. This approach seems to be helpful not only in the study of everyday conversations, but also in the analysis of linguistic behaviours in the workplace, power-relation-based institutional contexts, or political discourse.

The theory of men's and women's language use indicates differences in the objectives of male and female speech. According to Maltz and Borker (1982: 205), men and women learn to do different things with words: girls are more likely to use them in order "(1) to create and maintain relationships of closeness and equality, (2) to criticise others in acceptable ways, and (3) to interpret accurately the speech of other girls", whereas in the world of boys and men, speech is typically used "(1) to assert one's position of dominance, (2) to attract and maintain an audience, and (3) to assert oneself when other speakers have the floor" (Maltz and Borker 1982: 207).

The acquired patterns and stereotypes translate to conventionally masculine and feminine interactional style. According to Holmes and Stubbe (2003: 574), the masculine communication style is typically characterised as direct, confrontational, competitive, and autonomous, it involves more dominance in terms of public talking time, aggressive interruptions, and is task-and-outcome-oriented and referentially oriented. Feminine interaction style, on the other hand, tends to be indirect, conciliatory, facilitative, and collaborative, it involves only minor contribution in public, supportive feedback, is person-and-process-oriented, as well as affectively oriented. These findings support the previously stated claim that women fit in better in regard to the theory of modern leadership.

The research into male/female language differences provides multiple findings in terms of lexical and grammatical markers which tend to appear more often in one or the other category. To begin with, in Lakoff's (1975) groundbreaking publication a set of linguistic features is provided. The researcher adopts a somewhat psychological approach and claims that women tend to become unassertive and insecure in their linguistic behaviour due to the fact of having been taught to speak and act like ladies. Therefore, according to the scholar, women's speech involves hedging and tentativeness, politeness, less swearing (or using weak expletives instead), the use of tag questions, emotional emphasis (which is reflected in intonation and the use of intensifiers), more frequent use of empty adjectives, extended vocabulary (especially relating to colour names discrimination), direct quotations, declarations with interrogative intonation, and lack of humour.

Poynton's (1989) research supports some of Lakoff's (1975) findings – the researcher confirms that women tend to make use of euphemisms rather than swearing, they also apply more intensifiers, adjectives, tag questions, but less slang, they tend to be more polite in

speech – they use polite markers as *please* or *thank you* more frequently, and apply super-polite multiple modalities in their utterances. Additionally, on a discourse level, both Coats (1993) and Wareing (2004) indicate a greater degree of familiarity and intimacy of women’s utterances, and point out differences in the subjects touched.

Mulac, Bradac and Gibbons’s (2001) approach employing Maltz and Borker’s (1982) hypothesis assuming a necessary link between gender and culture (the gender-as-culture, or two cultures, hypothesis), allowed the researchers to verify the male/female differences in language use and conclude that, in general, men’s language reflects a relatively more dominant and certain position, whereas women’s language has a tendency to be more cautious and concerned not to offend or embarrass the interlocutor. Having examined a few empirical studies and twenty-one language features reported in them as either associated with male or female speech, Mulac, Bradac and Gibbons (2001) claim that the features more typical of men’s language are quantitative references, judgemental adjectives, commands, location words, brief sentences, and self-references. Women’s language, on the other hand, more frequently incorporates intensive adverbs, qualifying clauses, emotional reference, longer sentences, initial adverbials, uncertainty verbs and hedging, negation, simultaneous opposites, and questioning. The scholars also imply that the analysed features may have other functions and even reverse potential to the one traditionally ascribed to them, especially in terms of power relations and leadership:

apparently it is not the case that the male style can be characterized as powerful and the female style as powerless. Things are less tidy than this. Women’s use of indirectness may produce perceptions of low power, but may mask (and maintain) the actual power that they have. Their use of relatively elaborate language may lead message recipients to perceive them as being high in socio-intellectual status (Mulac et al., 1986). And their use of *references to emotion* may be associated with socio-emotional leadership. Men’s directness may produce perceptions of high power, but their succinctness may work against such perceptions. The implications of their use of personal language are unclear, but their use of instrumental language may be associated with task leadership.

(Mulac, Bradac and Gibbons 2001: 146, *italics* in the original text)

4. Research material and methodology

The research sample comprises eight speeches delivered by Jacinda Ardern at relatively crucial moments in her political career over time, embracing the period between 2008 and 2020. All transcripts were downloaded from Internet resources (mostly official archives), and additionally verified while watching the video recordings available online. All transcripts were accessed on August 18, 2021.

Table 1 Research material

Speech number and symbol	Speech title	Date of speech delivery	Source
SPEECH 1 (S1)	Maiden Statement	December 16, 2008	https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/hansard-debates/rhr/document/49HansS_20081216_00001012/ardern-jacinda-maiden-statements
SPEECH	Acceptance	October	https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2019/04/18/acceptance-

2 (S2+PC)	Speech and Press Conference	19, 2017	speech-and-press-conference-october-19-2017/
SPEECH 3 (S3)	United Nations Speech	September 27, 2018	https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2019/04/18/un-speech-september-27-2018/
SPEECH 4 (S4)	Statement after Christchurch Mosque Attacks	March 15, 2019	https://edition.cnn.com/2019/03/15/asia/new-zealand-jacinda-ardern-full-statement-intl/index.html
SPEECH 5 (S5)	Speech at Christchurch Memorial	March 28, 2019	https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2019/04/17/speech-at-christchurch-memorial-march-28-2019/
SPEECH 6 (S6)	Statement on Whakaari/White Island Eruption	December 9, 2019	https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/prime-minister-statement-white-island-eruption-2
SPEECH 7 (S7)	Statement to the Nation on COVID-19	March 21, 2020	https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/pm-address-covid-19-update
SPEECH 8 (S8)	Election Victory Speech	October 17, 2020	https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/new-zealand-pm-jacinda-ardern-victory-speech-transcript-wins-2020-new-zealand-election

This study aims to identify the features of the language of Jacinda Ardern as a female politician and leader, in terms of the specificity of men's and women's speech. It also attempts to verify if her language inclines more to the nature of the language of men or to the language of women, in particular in the context of political discourse. To reach this objective, a number of linguistic features have been analysed, based on the typologies and research findings described in the previous section, especially Lakoff (1975), Poynton (1989), Coats (1993), and Mulac, Bradac and Gibbons (2001). The quantitative data have been provided for each speech separately to enable diachronic observations, to limited extent though, considering the sample size. The figures concerning word count, sentence count, lexical density or readability were counted using the online word count device online-utility.org, and many a time, the frequencies and percentages of occurrence of the selected language features were additionally verified and scrutinised by hand. For the reason of space limitations, only selected qualities of the language of men and women are presented in the paper. Some aspects are illustrated with examples.

4.1 Assumptions and ambiguities

For the sake of analysis, two main assumptions must be made: (1) the language of men differs from the language of women, and (2) the speech may be considered as a leadership tool, whereas the specificity of Ardern's language (as represented in her speeches) may be assumed to constitute substantial part of her female political leadership.

It seems, however, that there are certain ambiguities and limitations to the study. Firstly, the political context may affect the language used just as much as the genre selected for analysis determines linguistic choices. Furthermore, speeches as such may be significantly determined by their purpose, which, in turn, influences the choice of their language. Also, as Schäffner (1997: 1) emphasises, the political address is an inhomogeneous genre which cannot be unambiguously classified as either spoken or written text, since it

happens to employ the characteristics of both (in Pieniążek-Niemczuk 2016: 70-71). The speech-versus-writing opposition may be problematic also when considering men’s and women’s language features, which features have fundamentally been studied within the scope of spoken discourse – speeches are delivered orally, although they tend to be prepared beforehand, which means they cannot be considered to be entirely spontaneous.

5. Findings

To begin with, a few general criteria shall be presented, organised in reference to the consecutive speeches.

Table 2 Pooled analysis of speeches

	S1	S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
No. of words	2389	601	1740	2659	666	862	975	1231	784
No. of sentences	107	27	80	118	40	59	52	72	50
No. of syllables	3594	929	2691	4160	981	1228	1555	1824	1146
Average no. of characters per word	4.36	4.52	4.63	4.62	4.46	4.17	4.63	4.40	4.25
Average no. of syllables per word	1.49	1.55	1.55	1.56	1.47	1.42	1.59	1.48	1.46
Average no. of words per sentence	22.51	22.26	21.75	22.53	16.68	14.61	18.75	17.10	15.68
Lexical density	43.13	41.43	44.94	42.76	39.58	43.74	47.79	43.79	42.09
Readability Gunning Fog index	13.26	13.90	13.78	13.69	9.67	8.67	12.59	10.58	10.15
Maori used	yes	no		yes	no	yes	no	no	yes

The pooled analysis of the selected speeches and statements shows that even though the speeches themselves may differ in length, which may be determined by external factors, such as time limitations, a few characteristics are relatively stable, be it the average number of characters or syllables per word, or the lexical density parameter. Supposedly, the sample is too small to extrapolate the results to the general, but within the researched texts, from the diachronic perspective, one may observe a tendency for creating shorter and shorter sentences in Arden’s utterances, which correlates with the level of readability of individual texts. Longer sentences are more characteristic of women’s language (Mulac, Bradac and Gibbons 2001), so this kind of change may indicate the impact of contextual factors on Arden’s linguistic choices over time.

An additional feature of Arden's discourse is the use of the Maori language, which she incorporates in her addresses on a regular basis. Here is an example:

- (1) *E rau rangatira mā, e ngā reo, e ngā mana. Tēnā koutou katoa. Ngāi Tahu Whānui, tēnā koutou. E papaki tū ana ngā tai o maumahara ki runga o Ōtautahi. Haere mai tātou me te aroha, me te rangimārie, ki te whānau nei, e ora mārire ai anō rātau, e ora mārire ai anō, tātou katoa.*⁸ (S5)

This is consistent with what she insisted on in her maiden speech – to introduce compulsory instruction in this language in New Zealand schools:

- (2) *I attended Morrinsville College, which is a fantastic school and an example of why we should be proud of our public education system and the teachers working within it. I only wish that my education could have extended to the universal teaching of te reo Māori, so that more of my generation could converse in our national language rather than in the more common offering of German, French, and Japanese. Education in language builds understanding. I join colleagues who have gone before me in calling for the universal and compulsory teaching of te reo in our schools, and for all of the necessary resource that goes with it.* (S1)

By using te reo, Arden expresses her Maori identity and gives honour to her roots. It does not appear in each and every statement, but may be considered part of Arden's discourse.

5.1 Men's language features

In regard to men's language features, nine linguistic parameters have been investigated: quantitative references, judgemental adjectives, the imperative mood/commands, location words, brief sentences/ellipsis, self-references/I-references, swear words, and the use of humour and slang.

The results are mostly what would be expected, especially in terms of the linguistic items whose informality quintessentially disqualifies their application in political discourse and in the analysed genre.

Table 3 Occurrence of men's language features

Feature	S1	S2 + PC	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	
Quantitative references	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Judgemental adjectives	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	+
Commands/ imperative mood	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	+
Location words	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Brief sentences/ ellipsis	+	-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	+/-	+/-
Self(I)-references	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Swear words	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Humour	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+
Slang	-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-	-	-

5.1.1 Quantitative references

Jacinda Ardern makes quantitative references in every speech, although they differ in number, which, in turn, is dictated by the content and the paramount objective of each text.

Table 4 Number of quantitative references

Feature	S1	S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
Quantitative references	8	2	1	8	11	6	8	1	7

The reasons for application of figures in Ardern's speeches are multiple – the politician provides them in order to inform the public about the current situation, to report what has been done, to give statistics and support her view or give legitimacy to governmental actions or her party's.

- (3) *Labour lifted **130,000** children out of poverty through Working for Families, but that does not mean that may do not remain there still.* (S1)
- (4) *The threat climate change poses demands it, but we only represent **less than 0.2%** of global emissions.* (S3)
- (5) *There were **two** explosions, one after the other in quick succession. The police have advised that of the **47** people located on or near the island at the time of the eruption, **five** are deceased and **31** have sustained injuries, many are critical. A further **8** are still missing. **Three** have been discharged from hospital overnight.* (S6)

5.1.2 Judgemental adjectives

Adjectives which may be classified as judgemental do not appear in all speeches, and mostly if they do, they are rare. The biggest number has been detected in Speech 1 (8 adjectives) and Speech 3 (5 adjectives), whereas only one instance in Speech 5, Speech 6 and Speech 8, and additionally one during the press conference after Speech 2.

- (6) *I attended Morrinsville College, which is **fantastic** school [...].* (S1)
- (7) *It is **shameful** enough that we are about to lose New Zealand's most proactive legislation in response to the impacts of climate change that we have seen to date.* (S1)
- (8) *But even the **ugliest** of viruses can exist in places they are not welcome.* (S5)

Judgemental adjectives allow Ardern to express her own opinion on various issues, to comment on social and political undertakings, and other events and their ramifications. Sometimes, she seems to speak on behalf of the public too.

5.1.3 Commands and the imperative mood

The imperative mood is not applied in every analysed address, but it does appear in four of them: Speech 3 (2 occurrences), Speech 5 (7 occurrences), Speech 7 (5 occurrences) and Speech 8 (2 occurrences). There is also one occurrence in Press Conference.

The imperative mood may be used to give commands and orders, but in speeches its function may as well be to make direct requests or motivate to specific performance on the part of the addressed. Apart from positive imperative mood sentences, utterances with the imperative with the word *let* have been detected. Some examples from the compiled research material are as follows:

- (9) *Please just **think** about that for a moment.* (S3)
- (10) *So, **let's start** here with the institutions that have served us well; in times of need, and will do so again.* (S3)
- (11) *Men of every creed and race, **gather** here before Thy face, asking Thee to bless this place, God **defend** our free land. From dissension, envy, hate, and corruption **guard** our state. **Make** our country good and great, God **defend** New Zealand.* (S5, as part of New Zealand's national anthem)
- (12) *This alert system is designed to help us through that, so please do stay tuned and we will share daily updates [...].* (S7)
- (13) *Please be strong, **be** kind and **unite** against Covid-19.* (S7)
- (14) *So, **let's step** forward together. [...] **Let's keep** moving.* (S8)

One may observe that the imperative mood constructions are often softened and made sound more polite by adding the lexeme *please*. The *let's* variant also has a somewhat considerate overtone. Interestingly enough, the most direct instances of the imperative mood can be found in the fragment which Ardern happens to quote – a fragment of the national anthem, in which God is the addressee of the request and prayer, uttered by Ardern on behalf of the nation.

In regard to commands and requests, apart from the imperative mood, Ardern also employs the modal verb *need*, which happens to be one of the most frequently used words in business language and institutional discourse, a claim that may be supported by its very high frequency within both the Cambridge Business English Corpus (BEC) and the Cambridge and Nottingham Business English Corpus (CANBEC). Here is an example from Speech 7:

- (15) *At each level there are things **we need you to do** to keep you safe, and there are things the government will do too. [...] We will use this alert system every time we update our cases so you know if the status in your area has gone up or down or stayed the same, and what **you'll need to do**. [...] Here are the things that **we need from you**. [...] **We also need everyone to** start working differently.* (S7)

The use of *need* is characteristic of institutional context, whose Ardern's speeches are certainly part of. *Need* may be on the one hand considered as a more polite, more feminine, way of giving orders, but, on the other hand, it is a typical way of delegating duties, responsibilities, and assigning tasks in formal professional, organisational and institutional discourses.

5.1.4 Location words

Location words appear in each of the analysed speeches whenever Ardern refers to a place or location of something.

Table 5 Number of location words

Feature		S1	S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
Location words	Number	44	5	13	34	12	3	23	11	4
	Percentage	1.84%	0.83%	0.75%	1.28%	1.80%	0.35%	2.36%	0.89%	0.51%

Ardern uses prepositions of place on a regular basis and their frequency varies among individual speeches, mostly depending on the content.

- (16) *I have very good memories of growing up **in** this small rural Waikato town. (S1)*
 (17) *Mr Speaker, as we focus on the tragic events **at** Whakaari/White Island, I'm reminded of two things. (S6)*

5.1.5 Brief sentences and ellipsis

Hardly ever does Ardern incorporate brief sentences in her addresses. Examples similar to the ones suggested by Mulac, Bradac and Gibbons (2001) can be found only in one speech (although this one may still be questionable) and one press conference utterance.

- (18) *Maiden statements are a bit like words spoken in a heated argument; **like it or not**, they will come back to haunt one. (S1)*
 (19) ***Sorry, sorry.** (PC)*

Ellipsis as a grammatical phenomenon may be observed in more texts, especially Speech 3, Speech 4, Speech 5, Speech 7 and Speech 8, but this should be rather considered in terms of a rhetoric measure, often simultaneously making use of anaphora, such as in the example below.

- (20) *They were simple words, repeated by community leaders who witnessed the loss of their friends and loved ones. [They were] **Simple words**, whispered by the injured from their hospital beds. [They were] **Simple words**, spoken by the bereaved and everyone I met who has been affected by this attack. (S5, text in square brackets added by the author)*

5.1.6 Self-references

I-references appear in all analysed texts. However, one may observe a tendency for them to appear less and less frequently over time.

Table 6 Number of self-references

Feature		S1	S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
Self-references	Number	93	17	27	13	9	3	14	8	8
	Percentage	3.89%	2.83%	1.55%	0.49%	1.35%	0.35%	1.44%	0.65%	1.02%

Within political and institutional context, apart from *I*-references, worth investigating are also *we*-references and references to other men and women. Here are the ones encountered in the speeches:

Table 7 Occurrence of self-references, *we*-references and references to other men and women

Pronoun/ possessive adjective	S1		S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
<i>I</i>	93	18	40	14	9	-	14	11	8	
	3.89%	2.99%	2.29%	0.53%	1.35%	-	1.44%	0.89%	1.02%	
<i>me</i>	21	1	5	2	1	2	-	-	1	
	0.88%	0.17%	0.29%	0.08%	0.15%	0.23%	-	-	0.13%	
<i>my</i>	40	1	10	5	-	-	-	1	-	
	1.67%	0.17%	0.57%	0.19%	-	-	-	0.08%	-	
<i>myself</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	0.04%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<i>we</i>	14	14	76	106	18	26	11	55	26	
	0.59%	2.33%	4.37%	3.99%	2.70%	3.02%	1.13%	4.47%	3.32%	
<i>us</i>	5	3	1	17	1	11	2	3	6	
	0.21%	0.49%	0.06%	0.645	0.15%	1.28%	0.21%	0.24%	0.77%	
<i>our</i>	18	1	12	43	7	14	7	11	12	
	0.75%	0.17%	0.69%	1.62%	1.05%	1.62%	0.72%	0.89%	1.53%	
<i>ours</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	0.03%	-	-	-	-	-	
<i>she</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	0.04%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<i>her</i>	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	0.29%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<i>he</i>	6	1	5	-	-	1	-	-	-	
	0.25%	0.17%	0.29%	-	-	0.12%	-	-	-	
<i>his</i>	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	0.13%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<i>him</i>	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	
	0.08%	-	-	0.08%	-	-	-	-	-	

We-references are very frequent in all analysed texts, which is a common phenomenon in institutional discourse, in political context, and also at the lower genre level, although their distribution may be different in individual addresses. They certainly reflect Ardern's identity either with her party or, and this is more frequent, with her voters, followers, the citizens. It indicates their common goals as a nation, and common values and roots. One may also say that, to some extent, *we*-references reflect the transformational leadership style.

As can be seen above, references to other women and men are rare, and most of them have been detected in Speech 1 – Maiden Speech, in which Ardern thanks a few colleagues and authorities for support and guidance which eventually led her to entering the House of Representatives.

5.1.7 Humour

The appearance of this feature is significantly influenced by the subject matter of individual addresses. It is, therefore, understandable that particular contexts will not allow it by convention. Nonetheless, if it is possible, Ardern does not refrain from incorporating

humorous remarks in her speeches, although it must be emphasised that it is by no means excessive, rather well-balanced. Furthermore, the humorous utterances detected in the sample cannot be classified as typical jokes, but rather situational humour, mostly including references to her very own persona. In Speech 1, five humorous fragments were detected, four during the press conference after Speech 2, and one in Speech 8. Here are some examples:

- (21) *Some people have asked me whether I am a radical. My answer to that question is simple: “I am from Morrinsville.” Where I come from a radical is someone who chooses to drive a Toyota rather than a Holden or a Ford. (S1)*
- (22) *Barry’s just the loudest so I’m just going to... (PC) (spontaneously, when a few reporters asked questions simultaneously)*
- (23) *But most importantly, thank you to the many people who gave us their vote who trusted us to continue with leading New Zealand’s recovery, who backed to the plan we are already rolling out. And to those amongst you who may not have supported Labour before **and the results tell me there were a few of you.** (S8)*

5.1.8 Swear words and slang

These two features have not been detected in the analysed material, just as expected. The only one occurrence of the colloquial word *yeah* uttered during the press conference is insufficient to ascribe Ardern the use of slang. Both features are determined by the public character of the genre and formal political context.

5.2 Women’s language features

In compliance with the previously cited research, among the linguistic indicators typically ascribed to women, there are fourteen which have been subject to the present study: adjectives/extended vocabulary, including colour naming, intensive adverbs, qualifying clauses, emotional reference, longer sentences, initial adverbials, uncertainty verbs, hedging, negation, questioning, question tags, direct quotations, politeness in terms of the use of *please* and *thank you*, and politeness in terms of the use of super-polite multiple modalities.

Table 8 Occurrence of women’s language features

Feature	S1	S2 + PC	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
Adjectives/ extended vocabulary	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Intensive adverbs	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Qualifying clauses	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Emotional reference	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Longer sentences	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Initial adverbials	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Uncertainty	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+

verbs									
Hedging	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Negation	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Questioning	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-
Question tags	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Direct quotations	+/-	-	-	-	-	+/-	-	-	-
Politeness (please, thank you)	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	+
Super-polite multiple modalities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

From among the analysed language features typically ascribed to women, it may be said that half of them appear in all speeches (use of adjectives, intensive adverbs, qualifying clauses, emotional reference, longer sentences, initial adverbials, uncertainty verbs and other forms of hedging, and negation). Simultaneously, four may be recognised as absent (question tags, direct quotations, super-polite multiple modalities) or whose manifestation is rare or unlikely (questioning).

The parameters of women's language features do not unveil any significant diachronic changes. Although their distribution may vary from one speech to another, the results seem to reveal a relative norm.

The absence of tag questions or super-polite multiple modalities may be explained by their conventional use in conversations rather than monologues, such as official statements. Likewise, asking questions is not typical of the analysed genre, unless rhetorical questions qualify as a rhetoric measure enhancing the message. Lastly, direct quotations, whose occurrence is marginal in the sample, may also be classified as a rhetoric tool within the analysed context, rather than as an unambiguous indicator of men's or women's language. Therefore, the absence of these does not come as a surprise.

5.2.1 Adjectives/extended vocabulary, including colour-naming

The use of adjectives in Ardern's speeches is relatively stable, and it ranges between 3.30% and 6.92% of all words in the selected texts.

Table 9 Occurrence of adjectives

Feature		S1	S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
Adjectives/extended vocabulary	Number	122	20	91	184	22	38	54	59	39
	Percentage	5.11%	3.33%	5.23%	6.92%	3.30%	4.41%	5.68%	4.79%	4.97%

Adjectives seem to be an inherent property of Ardern's utterances. They allow the politician to describe facts, reality, objects, people, phenomena, and to create a specific image of the world in a manner of speaking.

Colour-naming may not be relevant in the analysed context, and rather unlikely in political discourse. Yet, a few colour names have been found in the selected material.

- (24) *I knew that there were suicides, and that the girl who used to babysit my sister and me one day turned **yellow** from hepatitis and could not visit us anymore. (S1)*
- (25) *I fear that our pride in New Zealand's clean, **green** reputation is already misplaced. (S1)*
- (26) *They have shown me that the world is not **black and white**, nor is it **rose-tinted**, and I honour them. (S1)*
- (27) *So, there it is: the answer to that **golden** question. (S1)*
- (28) *We will not issue any further offshore oil and gas exploration permits, we have set a goal of a hundred percent renewable energy generation by 2035, established a **green** infrastructure fund to encourage innovation and rolled out an initiative to plant 1 billion trees over the next 10 years. (S3)*

The colour names used do not extend beyond the basic colour palette. The lexeme *green* is always used to refer to the quality of being environmentally friendly. *Black and white* functions as an idiomatic expression in the provided context, and so does the lexeme *rose-tinted*, being part of an idiom (*see something through rose-tinted spectacles*).

5.2.2 Intensive adverbs

Intensive adverbs have been detected in all speeches and their distribution is fairly similar in all texts, though different lexemes are used.

Table 10 Occurrence of intensive adverbs

Feature		S1	S2 +PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
Intensive adverbs	Number	18	3	3	11	4	5	4	3	6
	Percentage	0.75%	0.49%	0.17%	0.41%	0.60%	0.58%	0.41%	0.24%	0.77%

Intensive adverbs enhance the message, they intensify adjectives standing beside them. As a typically women's language feature, they sometimes also allow to amplify the emotional load of an utterance.

- (29) *I am **very** mindful of the importance and the need for both. (S1)*
- (30) *Again, I felt an overwhelming sense of being **incredibly** honored, privileged and humbled. (PC)*
- (31) *Why wouldn't they when they themselves have had to adapt **so** rapidly to a changing world. (S3)*
- (32) *In their immediate efforts to get people off the island, those pilots made an **incredibly** brave decision under **extremely** dangerous circumstances. (S6)*
- (33) *The first **really** important thing to remember is that the vast majority of people who will ever have Covid-19 will only experience mild to moderate symptoms. (S7)*
- (34) *And we needed a team focused **absolutely** and **entirely** on New Zealand and Labour **absolutely** is. (S8)*

All intensive adverbs which appeared in the analysed texts are presented in the table below:

Table 11 Distribution of intensive adverbs

Intensive adverb	S1	S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
<i>so</i>	4	-	-	2	-	3	-	1	2
<i>very</i>	10	1	2	1	1	2	-	1	-
<i>quite</i>	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
<i>strongly</i>	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
<i>genuinely</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>extraordinarily</i>	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>incredibly</i>	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-
<i>absolutely</i>	-	-	3	1	1	-	-	-	2
<i>acutely</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
<i>truly</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
<i>unashamedly</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
<i>increasingly</i>	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1
<i>utterly</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
<i>seriously</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
<i>extremely</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
<i>heavily</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
<i>really</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
<i>entirely</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

From among the demonstrated adverbs, three seem to be applied most often: so, very and absolutely. Just as adjectives, intensive adverbs may be acknowledged to be a subsistent quality of Arden's manner of speech.

5.2.3 Qualifying clauses

Qualifying clauses constitute another inherent part of Arden's language. They appear in all speeches and in relative abundance. The tabulation below demonstrates the number of sentences which include qualifying clauses.

Table 12 Number of sentences including qualifying clauses

Feature		S1	S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
Qualifying clauses	Number of sentences	39	14	24	31	14	22	11	18	14
	Percentage	36.45%	51.85%	30%	26.27%	35%	37.29%	21.15%	25%	28%

Qualifying clauses are multiple in the analysed sample, even the number of sentences in which they appear indicates that. This property of Arden's speech certainly contributes to the length of sentences as such, which can be observed in the examples:

- (35) *Murupara and the wonderful people **who live there**, and **who continue to work hard to rejuvenate their community**, formed just one of the many lessons **I have learnt**. (S1)*
- (36) *Labour has always believed that government should be a partner in ensuring an economy **that works and delivers for all New Zealanders**. (S2)*
- (37) *If we forget this history and the principles **which drove the creation of the UN**, we will be doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past. (S3)*

- (38) *And secondly, the strongest possible condemnation of the ideology of the people **who did this**.* (S4)
- (39) *We will remember the first responders **who gave so much of themselves to save others**.* (S5)
- (40) *We are a nation full of ordinary people **who do extraordinary things**.* (S6)

Although qualifying clauses contribute a lot to the length of sentences and to the increased level of readability, it may also contribute to audience's perception of Ardern as an eloquent and well-educated person, whose communication skills are desirable on political scene on which Ardern represents the nation.

5.2.4 Emotional reference

Jacinda Ardern does not refrain from making emotional references. Below are examples from different speeches.

- (41) *It was an experience that deepened my commitment to having a balance in employment relationships – a balance that **I was shocked** to see so severely disrupted in my very first week in this House.* (S1)
- (42) *I want to conclude again by saying **I feel extraordinarily honored and privileged** to be in the position to form a government with a Labour – with Labour at the lead.* (S2)
- (43) *It should hardly come as a surprise that we have seen a global trend of **young people showing dissatisfaction** with our political systems and calling on us to do things differently.* (S3)
- (44) ***It is with extreme sadness that I tell you** that, as at 7 p.m. tonight, we believe that 40 people have lost their lives in this act of extreme violence.* (S4)
- (45) *To those who have lost or are missing family and friends, **we share in your grief and sorrow, and we are devastated**.* (S6)
- (46) *I understand that all of **this rapid change creates anxiety and uncertainty**, especially when it means changing how we live.* (S7)

Depending on the circumstances, Ardern either expresses her personal feelings or refers to the feelings of others, or else she sympathises with victims and condemns evil deeds. One can observe both positive and negative emotions expressed in her addresses.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the use of emphatic references aligns with the supposedly most effective leadership style.

5.2.5 Longer sentences

Constructing long sentences is another women's language feature which happens to be Ardern's speech characteristic as well. As mentioned in one of the previous superordinate sections, one can observe a tendency for Ardern to build shorter and shorter sentences, but the sample is probably too small to extrapolate these results. The table below shows the number of long, complex sentences which were suggested for rephrasing by the word count tool (online-utility.org) to improve the index of readability.

Table 13 Occurrence of long sentences suggested for rephrasing

Feature		S1	S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
Longer sentences	Number	33	9	25	36	13	18	16	22	16
	Percentage	30.8%	33.3%	31.3%	30.5%	32.5%	30.5%	30.8%	30.6%	32%

As one can see, each time nearly one third of sentences is advised for shortening. It would certainly contribute to better readability; however, longer sentences may also be a formality marker. It may as well reflect the ambiguous nature of the genre of speech as vacillating between spontaneous speaking and a pre-prepared piece of writing.

5.2.6 Initial adverbials

Likewise, initial adverbials are a norm in Ardern's speeches, which, just like qualifying clauses may contribute to an increased level of difficulty of a text. The presented tabulation includes the number of sentences with adverbials at the beginning.

Table 14 Occurrence of initial adverbials

Feature		S1	S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
Initial adverbials	Number of sentences	10	2	16	39	8	6	8	19	11
	Percentage	9.35%	7.41%	20%	33.1%	20%	10.17%	15.38%	26.39%	22%

By placing adverbials at the beginning of sentences, Ardern shifts the emphasis in her utterances. Although it has been proved to be typically a feature of women's language, it may also be consistent with the specificity of the genre, which case would supposedly give advantage to women over men speakers in this respect. Here are a few examples:

- (47) *In the face of isolationism, protectionism, racism, the simple concept of looking outwardly and beyond ourselves of kindness and collectivism might just be as good a starting point as any.* (S3)
- (48) *For many, this may not have been the place they were born. In fact, for many, New Zealand was their choice.* (S4)
- (49) *Over the past two weeks we have heard the stories of those impacted by this terrorist attack.* (S5)
- (50) *In the immediate aftermath of the eruption, a number of helicopter pilots made the conscious decision to fly to the island to try to rescue people.* (S6)
- (51) *Today, I'm announcing an alert system for covid-19.* (S7)
- (52) *As a nation, we needed a plan for recovery.* (S8)

5.2.7 Uncertainty verbs

In the selected sample, six verbs which may be classified as uncertainty verbs have been observed: *sound, believe, seem, appear, imagine, and suspect.*

Table 15 Occurrence of uncertainty verbs

Feature		S1	S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
Uncertainty verbs	Number	5	3	2	2	3	-	1	2	1
	Percentage	0.21%	0.49%	0.11%	0.08%	0.45%	-	0.10%	0.16%	0.13%

One can see that this kind of verbs is quite rarely used. Below is their distribution in individual speeches.

Table 16 Distribution of uncertainty verbs

Verb	S1	S2 + PC		S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
<i>sound</i>	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>believe</i>	3	3	1	-	2	-	-	-	1
<i>seem</i>	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-
<i>appear</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
<i>imagine</i>	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>suspect</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

Uncertainty verbs are essentially instances of hedging, but the examples below may be confusing due to applied ways of emphasis.

- (53) *It **seems** a fitting place to stand.* (S3)
- (54) *From what we know, it **does appear** to have been well planned.* (S4)
- (55) *The fifth Labour Government made good progress on what I **believe must** continue to be our Focus – reducing poverty in this country.* (S1)

The auxiliary *does* emphasises the main verb *appear*, and is stressed in speech. In a similar manner, the modal verb *must* right after a more tentative verb *believe*, serves the same function. It is difficult, therefore, to unequivocally affirm a tentative character of at least some of the instances.

5.2.8 Hedging

Other instances of hedging have also been detected, but they are relatively infrequent. This category includes modal verbs expressing uncertainty, modal adverbs, or the use of expressions such as *a bit like, fairly, quite, kind of, or sort of*.

As for the first category, although Ardern uses modal verbs on many occasions, few of them express uncertainty:

- (56) *You **may** have chosen us -- but we utterly reject and condemn you.* (S4)
- (57) *That **may** change if we move into higher alert levels but sending children home at this stage doesn't necessarily reduce transmission in the community.* (S7)

Modal adverbs indicating uncertainty and tentativeness are also infrequent:

- (58) *I spent most of my time—this is **probably** a shock to members on the other side of the House—talking to small businesses, local authorities, and even police officers, trying to understand the delicate balancing act between creating a regulatory environment that protects citizens whilst also allowing business and public services to flourish.* (S1)
- (59) *In 1945 New Zealand Prime Minister Peter Fraser said that the UN Charter offered **perhaps** a last opportunity to work in unison to realize the hope in the hearts of all of us, for a peace that would be real lasting and worthy of human dignity.* (S3)

The same must be said about the last category – the use of abovementioned phrases is scarce in the selected sample:

- (60) *Maiden statements are **a bit like** words spoken in a heated argument; like it or not, they will come back to haunt one.* (S1)
- (61) *[...] to Darren, for all the leave that I know he will grant me and for dispensing the **kind of** advice that proves he was born middle-aged but also that he was born wise [...].* (S1)

5.2.9 Negation

Negative forms have been found in almost every speech, both in full and contracted forms. Their distribution looks as follows:

Table 17 Occurrence of negative forms

Feature	S1	S2 + PC	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	
Negation	28	-	15	32	7	14	4	6	13

If negation typically reflects the specificity of women’s language, it may be said that Ardern’s speech does exhibit it. It must be pointed out, however, that deciding on it without any doubt may be hindered by lack of clear-cut reference.

5.2.10 Questioning

In speeches, questioning is limited to asking rhetorical questions, which comes down to serving as a rhetoric device. Ardern does not expect any answers on the part of her audience. The questions are supposed to be thought-provoking. The ones present in the researched material are as follows:

- (62) *That surely leaves us all with the question: how did we get here and how do we get out?* (S3)
- (63) *If my Pacific neighbors do not have the option of opting out of the effects of climate change, why should we be able to opt out of taking action to stop it?* (S3)
- (64) *What better way to hold ourselves to account and what better group to do that for than children?* (S3)
- (65) *What words adequately express the pain and suffering of 50 men, women and children lost, and so many injured? What words capture the anguish of our Muslim community being the target of hatred and violence? What words express the grief of a city that has already known so much pain?* (S5)
- (66) *And right now, what could be more important than that?* (S7)

5.2.11 Direct quotations

There are only two fragments found in two speeches, which may count as instances of direct quotations. One of them is the already cited sentence from Speech 1: “*I am from Morrinsville.*” The other one may be the quote from the national anthem from Speech 5. From among these, the first one seems more congruent with the category; still, the number of occurrence is infinitesimal and, thus, supposedly negligible.

5.2.12 Politeness

In terms of politeness, it may be said that even though Ardern is polite, she does not exaggerate – super-polite multiple modalities as exemplified in the theoretical section are absent in her addresses. To some extent, this fact is justified by the specificity of the genre. However, politeness shows in Ardern’s use of *please* and *thank you*.

Table 18 Occurrence of *please* and *thank you*

Feature		S1	S2 + PC	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	
Politeness	<i>please</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-
	<i>thank you</i>	1	6	-	-	-	1	-	1	6

As mentioned earlier in the paper, Ardern usually softens imperative sentences with the word *please*, whereas she thanks if the context “requires” it. Please consider the examples below:

- (67) *Please just think about that for a moment.* (S3)
- (68) *This alert system is designed to help us through that, so please do stay tuned and we will share daily updates, especially as alert levels can move from one level to the next in a short space of time as we have seen elsewhere in the world.* (S7)
- (69) *Please be strong, be kind and unite against covid-19.* (S7)
- (70) *And for that, I only have two simple words. Thank you. Thank you to the people who worked so hard to share our message, who volunteered for us in what felt like an endless campaign. Thank you to the candidates and members of Parliament who worked not just for six weeks, but for three years to earn their community’s support. But most importantly, thank you to the many people who gave us their vote, who trusted us to continue with leading New Zealand’s recovery, who backed to the plan we are already rolling out. And to those amongst you who may not have supported Labour before, and the results tell me there were a few of you. To you, to you I say thank you. [...] And in times of crisis, I believe New Zealand has shown that. And so again, I say, thank you.* (S8)

(Super)-politeness may be viewed as a marker of uncertainty and subordination, but, in formal political contexts, it may as well be desirable. There is probably no need to be super-polite, and so super-politeness is not Ardern’s attribute. However, politeness may be considered as a necessary component of political diplomacy.

6. Conclusions

All things considered, a few conclusions may be formulated.

Firstly, some of the analysed features from both categories have not been detected at all, e.g., swear words as a men’s language feature, and tag questions or super-polite multiple modalities as women’s language features.

Secondly, the occurrence of a few characteristics in both categories is infinitesimal and may be considered negligible and insufficient to observe significant tendencies within

them, which could be extended beyond the analysed sample – these include slang or brief sentences as men’s language features, and direct quotations as a women’s language feature.

The reasons for the above may be (1) the specificity of political discourse and political context, (2) the specificity of the genre, and (3) limited research sample size.

On the other hand, Jacinda Ardern’s language manifests both the features of the language of men and of women in many respects. The number of particular features and the distribution of lexical and syntactical manifestations vary among individual speeches, which is often determined by specific purposes or themes of the statements.

Furthermore, although it must be remarked with caution due to the research sample size, some changes may be observed diachronically, such as the average number of words per sentence (sentence length), self-references, or readability.

Last but not least, the frequency of appearance of most features (of both men’s and women’s language) stays at a relatively stable level over time (e.g. quantitative references, location words, the number of adjectives, uncertainty verbs, initial adverbials, qualifying clauses, or longer sentences suggested for rephrasing), which allows to presume that these constitute relatively stable and inherent part of Ardern’s language as a woman politician and leader. Many assumingly give her advantage in leadership.

In conclusion, although it is hard to judge unequivocally if Jacinda Ardern’s speech inclines to male or female language, she is very skilful as a public speaker, and she certainly makes use of the potential of both.

Notes:

¹ Hehir Liam (6 May 2019) “The growth of celebrity politics should be resisted”. Stuff; available at <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/opinion/112483571/the-growth-of-celebrity-politics-should-be-resisted>.

² Griffiths James (1 September 2017) “‘All bets are off’ in New Zealand vote as ‘Jacindamania’ boosts Labour”. CNN; available at <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/09/01/asia/new-zealand-labour-jacinda-ardern/index.html>;

Ainge Roy Eleonor (10 August 2017) “New Zealand gripped by ‘Jacindamania’ as new Labour leader soars in polls”. The Guardian; available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/10/new-zealand-gripped-by-jacindamania-as-new-labour-leader-soars-in-polls>; Ainge Roy Eleonor (21 October 2018) “Ardern’s first year: New Zealand grapples with hangover from Jacindamania”. The Guardian; available at

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/21/jacinda-ardern-first-year-new-zealand-grapples-with-jacindamania-hangover>;

Manhire Toby (11 December 2019) “The decade in politics: From Team Key to Jacindamania”. The Spinoff; available at <https://thespinoff.co.nz/partner/decade-in-review/11-12-2019/the-decade-in-politics-from-team-key-to-jacindamania/>;

Ergin Asli (29 October 2020) “Covid-19 brings the second wave of ‘Jacindamania’ to New Zealand”. McGill Business Review; available at

<https://mcgillbusinessreview.com/articles/covid-19-brings-the-second-wave-of-jacindamania-to-new-zealand>.

³ Peacock Collin (3 August 2017) “‘Jacinda effect’ in full effect in the media”. Radio New Zealand; available at <https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/mediawatch/audio/201853439/jacinda-effect-in-full-effect-in-the-media>.

⁴ Kapitan Sommer (4 September 2020) “The Facebook prime minister: How Jacinda Ardern became New Zealand’s most successful political influencer”. The Conversation; available at <https://theconversation.com/the-facebook-prime-minister-how-jacinda-ardern-became-new-zealands-most-successful-political-influencer-144485>.

⁵ Ibidem.

⁶ Bala Thenappan (16 March 2019) “Jacinda Ardern: The Celebrity”. Penn Political Review; available at <https://pennpoliticalreview.org/2019/03/jacinda-ardern-the-celebrity/>.

⁷ Peacock Colin (30 September 2018) “Jacindamania goes global: the PM in US at the UN”. Radio New Zealand; available at <https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/mediawatch/audio/2018664346/jacindamania-goes-global-the-pm-in-us-at-the-un>.

⁸ The translation of the text is as follows: I acknowledge amongst us today our distinguished leaders, speakers and those who bear authority. My greetings to the whole of Ngāi Tahu. The tides of remembrance flow over Christchurch today. So let us gather with love, in peace, for this family, so that they may truly live again, so that we all may truly live again.

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Anna Majer
University of Silesia in Katowice
Institute of Linguistics
Faculty of Humanities
Grota-Roweckiego 5, 41-200 Sosnowiec
Poland
e-mail: anna.majer@us.edu.pl

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