



INVESTIGATING LANGUAGE STYLE IN H3 PODCAST YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Meysi Natasya Sitepu

meysy.sitepu@student.uhn.ac.id

Universitas HKBP Nommensen, Medan, Indonesia

Arsen Nahum Pasaribu

arsen.pasaribu@uhn.ac.id

Universitas HKBP Nommensen, Medan, Indonesia

Donna Ria Pasaribu

donnaria.pasaribu@uhn.ac.id

Universitas HKBP Nommensen, Medan, Indonesia

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis gaya bahasa serta menentukan gaya bahasa yang dominan digunakan oleh audiens dalam kolom komentar YouTube pada kanal H3 Podcast. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan mengacu pada teori gaya bahasa yang dikemukakan oleh Martin Joos yang mengklasifikasikan bahasa ke dalam lima kategori, yaitu frozen, formal, consultative, casual, dan intimate. Data penelitian berupa komentar berbahasa Inggris yang diambil dari tiga video H3 Podcast dengan tingkat keterlibatan audiens yang tinggi. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui teknik dokumentasi dengan menyeleksi komentar yang relevan, kemudian dianalisis berdasarkan karakteristik linguistik masing-masing gaya bahasa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat empat jenis gaya bahasa yang digunakan, yaitu casual, intimate, consultative, dan formal, dengan gaya bahasa casual sebagai yang paling dominan. Dominasi ini menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi digital dalam kolom komentar YouTube cenderung bersifat informal, spontan, dan ekspresif. Temuan ini juga menegaskan bahwa teori gaya bahasa Martin Joos masih relevan dalam menganalisis penggunaan bahasa dalam konteks komunikasi digital kontemporer.

Kata kunci: Gaya Bahasa, Komentar YouTube, Sociolinguistik, Martin Joos, Komunikasi digital

Abstract

This study aims to identify the types of language styles and determine the dominant style used by audiences in the YouTube comment section of the H3 Podcast channel. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach based on Martin Joos's theory of language style, which classifies language into five categories: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. The data consist of English comments collected from three H3 Podcast videos with high audience engagement. The data were collected through documentation by selecting relevant comments and analyzed based on the linguistic characteristics of each language style. The findings reveal that four types of language styles are used, namely casual, intimate, consultative, and formal, with casual style being the most dominant. This dominance indicates that digital communication in YouTube comment sections tends to be informal, spontaneous,





and expressive. The findings also confirm that Martin Joos's theory remains relevant in analyzing language use in contemporary digital communication contexts.

Keywords: Language style, YouTube comments, sociolinguistics, Martin Joos, digital communication

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a crucial role in human communication as it enables individuals to express ideas, opinions, and emotions in social interaction. However, language use is not uniform; it varies depending on the context, participants, and communicative purposes. In sociolinguistics, this variation is understood as a reflection of social relationships and situational factors. Wardhaugh & Fuller, (2015) emphasize that language variation is influenced by participants, setting, and communicative goals, indicating that language is inherently context-dependent.

One important aspect of language variation is language style. Language style refers to the variation of language use based on the level of formality and the relationship between participants. According to Martin Joos, as cited in Zahra et al.,(2025), language style can be classified into five categories: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. Each of these styles represents different levels of social distance and communicative situations. This classification provides a relevant framework for analysing how language is used in different social contexts, including digital communication.

In recent years, the development of digital technology has significantly transformed communication patterns. Communication is increasingly conducted through online platforms, where written interaction often resembles spoken language in terms of spontaneity, informality, and immediacy (Crystal, 2011) Social media platforms, particularly YouTube, function not only as spaces for content consumption but also as interactive communication environments where users actively participate by expressing opinions and responding to content. Burgess and Green (2018) argue that YouTube also represents a participatory culture in which audiences actively engage through comments, likes, and discussions.

The YouTube comment section represents a unique form of digital discourse in which users express reactions, opinions, and emotions toward video content (Herring et al., 2013). Various language styles may appear within a single comment section, influenced by users' intentions and social relationships. Based on this background, this study aims to identify the types of language styles used by audiences in the YouTube comment section of the H3 Podcast channel and to determine the dominant language style based on Martin Joos's classification.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design to analyze language styles in YouTube comments. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research focuses on analyzing non-numerical data such as texts and documents to understand patterns of meaning.

The data consisted of 60 English comments written by audiences in the comment section of the H3 Podcast channel. The comments were selected from three videos with high audience engagement. Data selection was based on relevance, clarity, and the presence of identifiable linguistic features.

The researcher acted as the main instrument of the study. Data were collected through documentation and analyzed by classifying comments into language styles based on Joos's theory.





RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis reveals that only four of the five language styles proposed by Joos (1967) were identified in the data, each occurring with varying frequencies. The distribution of these language styles is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Language Styles

Language Style	Frequency	Percentage
Casual	36	60%
Intimate	12	20%
Consultative	8	13%
Formal	4	7%
Frozen	0	0%

The table shows that four types of language styles are identified in the data, namely casual, intimate, consultative, and formal styles. Casual style appears as the most dominant type. Frozen style is not found in the data.

This finding directly answers the research objectives, namely identifying the types of language styles and determining the dominant one. The dominance of casual style indicates that communication in YouTube comment sections tends to be informal, spontaneous, and expressive.

Table 2. Representative Data of Language Styles

No	Comment	Style	Linguistic Features (Explanation Based on Joos)
1	No chöp chöp today have a safe flight timestamp boi	Casual	Uses slang (“boi”), incomplete grammatical structure, and relaxed sentence formation, indicating informal interaction without strict rules (Joos: casual style).
2	"How you gonna talk to an 8 year old about skibidi toilet when you fought in WW2" is an all time quote lol	Casual	Contains contraction (“gonna”), humor, and slang (“lol”), reflecting spontaneous and informal communication typical of casual style.
3	Anywhoo!, I'm gonna go touch some grass now and I'll see you guys in a month.	Casual	Uses informal discourse marker (“Anywhoo”), contraction (“gonna”), and conversational tone, showing relaxed and familiar interaction.
4	Can't believe Morgan accepted the Creedence Kleinwater Curse for Tamara! She a real one for that!	Casual	Non-standard grammar (“She a real one”), expressive tone, and informal vocabulary indicate casual style with strong familiarity.
5	Avery's edit at the end was absolutely epic, 100/10 🙌 shoutout to his family	Casual	Uses exaggeration (“100/10”), slang (“epic”), and emoji, reflecting





			expressive and informal communication.
6	Timestamp boy said fuck work	Casual	Includes profanity (“fuck”), very informal lexical choice, and simple structure, typical of casual style without social constraints.
7	I laughed out loud at the live chatter who said “ableist Reddit is gunna go crazy with this” when Ethan was testing out his new walking cane LOL	Casual	Contains abbreviation (“LOL”), contraction (“gunna”), and humorous narrative, indicating informal and spontaneous communication.
8	I’ve been micro dosing this episode until the break ends. I only have 1 hr left...	Casual	Uses metaphorical slang (“micro dosing”) and relaxed narrative structure, reflecting informal personal expression.
9	why am i crying over the recap...wtf is wrong with me lol	Casual	Uses lowercase writing, slang (“wtf,” “lol”), and ellipsis, showing emotional spontaneity and lack of formal structure.
10	Dan giving the breaking idubbz news wearing a pigtail wig gets me every time 😂	Casual	Includes emoji and narrative tone, informal structure, and humorous expression typical of casual style.
11	I really don't know where I'd be without this podcast and the amazing community it has, thank you for making my life infinitely better.	Intimate	Expresses deep personal emotion and gratitude, showing close psychological involvement and personal experience (Joos: intimate style).
12	It's been a tough year but H3 and the family made it so much easier to handle.	Intimate	Reflects personal life experience and emotional reliance, indicating closeness and subjective expression.
13	the h3 recap at the end had me so emotional... what a year it's been.	Intimate	Emotional reflection and personal reaction, showing internal feelings rather than public interaction.
14	Nothing can ever compare to the joy I feel when Dan screams	Intimate	Strong emotional expression (“joy I feel”), indicating personal attachment and subjective meaning.
15	I miss you all already	Intimate	Very direct emotional statement, indicating closeness and personal attachment between speaker and audience/community.
16	what if i forget the spanish word for glove in a month	Consultative	Uses interrogative form to seek consideration or response, reflecting semi-interactive communication (Joos: consultative).





17	How am I gonna know what the traffic is like for the next month? How is this allowed????	Consultative	Uses question form and repetition to seek response or clarification, indicating interaction with audience.
18	I must know what Tamara was going to say before she left...	Consultative	Expresses inquiry and expectation of information, indicating need for response or clarification.
19	Thank you all so much, enjoy your well deserved break!	Formal	Uses polite expression, complete grammatical structure, and respectful tone, typical of formal style.
20	Ethan, Hila, Dan, Zach, Ab, Lena, Love, Olivia, Nate, Morgan, Tamara, Gabe, Avery, Rae, Wuffy and extended crew: Thank you so much for the entertainment, you guys are a blessing in my life! Here's to another amazing year of H3!	Formal	Structured, respectful, and carefully organized sentence with explicit appreciation, indicating formal style despite digital context.

Explanation of Representative Data

Table 2 presents representative comments categorized based on language style according to Martin Joos. Each comment is analyzed based on linguistic features such as lexical choice, grammatical structure, and communicative function.

The comments categorized as casual style show strong characteristics of informal communication, including the use of slang, abbreviations, contractions, emojis, and non-standard grammar. For example, expressions such as “wtf,” “lol,” and “gonna” indicate spontaneity and relaxed interaction. According to Joos, casual style is typically used in informal situations where speakers share familiarity and do not follow strict linguistic rules. This explains why casual style dominates in YouTube comments, as the platform encourages free and expressive interaction.

The intimate style is reflected in comments that express personal feelings and emotional attachment. Statements such as “I really don't know where I'd be without this podcast” and “I miss you all already” show deep emotional involvement. Based on Joos's theory, intimate style is used in close relationships and often conveys implicit meaning and emotional depth. This finding indicates that YouTube comments also function as a space for emotional expression and community bonding.

The consultative style appears in comments that involve interaction, particularly in the form of questions. For instance, comments such as “How am I gonna know what the traffic is like?” indicate that users expect responses or engagement. According to Joos, consultative style is used in semi-formal situations where feedback is expected. This suggests that the YouTube comment section functions as an interactive communication space.

Meanwhile, the formal style is identified in comments that use polite expressions and complete grammatical structures, such as “Thank you so much for the entertainment.” This style reflects respect and social distance, which are key features of formal communication according to Joos.





Notably, frozen style is not found in the data. Frozen style typically appears in highly formal and fixed expressions such as legal texts or ceremonial language. Its absence indicates that YouTube comments are flexible and informal, making them incompatible with rigid linguistic forms.

Discussion

The findings of this study support previous sociolinguistic research which shows that not all language styles appear in every context. Several studies also found that only some of Joos's categories emerge depending on the situation and participants .

The dominance of casual style in this study is consistent with previous research, which shows that casual style is frequently used in informal settings because it reflects everyday communication and relaxed interaction . This occurs because language style is influenced by context, participants, and communicative purpose.

Furthermore, this finding aligns with the concept that digital communication tends to resemble spoken language, characterized by spontaneity, informality, and emotional expression. The presence of intimate and consultative styles also indicates that online platforms are not only used for sharing opinions but also for building social interaction and emotional connections.

This study also demonstrates that Martin Joos theory remains relevant in analyzing modern digital communication. Although originally developed for spoken language, the classification can still be effectively applied to written discourse in social media contexts.

In addition, the absence of frozen style strengthens the argument that highly formal and fixed language structures are not suitable for informal digital environments. This suggests that language use in social media is adaptive and influenced by communicative needs rather than rigid norms.

This finding is consistent with previous studies on language style in digital communication. Sarfraz et al. (2023) found that casual style dominates social media interactions due to its informal and expressive nature. Similarly, Dewi et al. (2025) reported that casual style is frequently used in podcast-related communication, reflecting relaxed interaction between speakers and audiences. These findings confirm that language style is strongly influenced by communication context and medium.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that not all five language styles proposed by Joos are present in YouTube comments, as only four styles were identified, namely casual, intimate, consultative, and formal, with casual style as the most dominant, while frozen style was not found in the data. The dominance of casual style indicates that communication in YouTube comment sections is largely informal, spontaneous, and expressive, reflecting the flexible nature of digital interaction. In addition, intimate style reflects emotional closeness among users, consultative style indicates interactive communication through questions or responses, and formal style represents politeness and respect despite the informal context. Overall, these findings demonstrate that language use in digital communication reflects social relationships, context, and communicative purposes, thereby confirming the continued relevance of Joos's theory in analyzing contemporary online discourse.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, several suggestions can be proposed:





1. For students, it is recommended to develop a deeper understanding of language style variation in digital communication, as this can improve their awareness of how language reflects social context and interpersonal relationships.
2. For lecturers, this study can be used as a reference in teaching sociolinguistics, particularly in illustrating how classical theories such as Martin Joos's framework can be applied to modern digital data.
3. For future researchers, it is suggested to expand the scope of analysis by examining language styles across different social media platforms or by combining language style analysis with other sociolinguistic aspects such as identity, power, or discourse functions.
4. For further studies, researchers are encouraged to include a larger dataset or apply mixed-method approaches to obtain more comprehensive findings regarding language use in digital communication.

REFERENCES

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Crystal, D. (2011). *Internet linguistics: A student guide*. Routledge.
- Dewi, K. T., Werdistira, W. A., & Suparman. (2025). An analysis of language styles found in podcast interviews. *JETLI*, 2(1), 20–30.
- Herring, S. C., Stein, D., & Virtanen, T. (2013). Introduction to the pragmatics of computer-mediated communication. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 47(1), 1–18.
- Sarfraz, Z., Farid, A., & Mahmood, B. (2023). Investigating language styles in Instagram captions. *Journal of Academic Research for Humanities*, 3(4), 258–269.
- Wardhaugh, R., & Fuller, J. M. (2015). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (7th ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Zahra, M. I., Aridah, A., Kalukar, V. J., Ping, M. T., & Setiawan, I. (2025). Analysis of student language style using Martin Joos theory. *FRASA Journal*, 6(2), 277–288.

