

**LANGUAGE STYLES OF LARA JEAN COVEY IN ALVAREZ'S FILM
*TO ALL THE BOYS I'VE LOVED BEFORE***

Novita Melati Ananta Putri¹ and Yohana Veniranda^{2*}

^{1,2}Sanata Dharma University, Indonesia

novitaivon97@gmail.com¹ and veniranda@usd.ac.id²

*correspondence: veniranda@usd.ac.id

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate the types of language styles used by Lara Jean Covey and the social factors that influence her to use different language styles in Sofia Alvarez's Film *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*. This research is a content analysis. The source of data was the transcript of the film. Data were analyzed based on the five language styles adopted from Martin Joos' (1976) and Francis' (1965) theories. Holmes' (2001) theory was used to analyze the social factors that influence Lara Jean Covey in using different language styles. The findings showed three types of language styles used by Lara Jean Covey. The three language styles were the consultative style, intimate style, and casual style. The most dominant language style used by Lara Jean Covey in the film is casual style. She tended to use a casual style to make the atmosphere more relaxed. Then, four social factors influencing Lara Jean in using different language styles are participants, setting, topic, and function.

Keywords: language style, Lara Jean Covey, to all the boys I've loved before

Introduction

Humans use language to interact with other individuals. People adopt various types of language during their communication with other individuals in every kind of situation. Wardaugh (2006, p.1) claimed that what the representatives of a specific community deliver is called language. In every communication, language is an essential item. Individuals can deliver their message from their utterances if they communicate well. Language helps humans tell other individuals things and convey the purpose of their conversation. Language and society may correlate with each other because, as human beings, it is impossible to separate humans from the community and environment, and they still need each other.

There is a term called sociolinguistics. Hudson (1996) and Putri (2010) stated that sociolinguistics is a study of the relationship between language and society and how people use language in different social situations. The changing of languages connected to sociolinguistics is likely to occur almost in everyday dialogue, magazines, newspapers, articles, novels, television programs, and videos. People had different styles, dialects, and accents when they were talking. Holmes (2001,



p.9) stated that variety is an extended term that consists of various accents, various dialects, various linguistic styles, and also various languages that contrast each other for social consideration. The social factors and the formality of the situation affect each utterance. Those types of other language styles or language variations affect the social factors that appear in a person's speech. Research on language styles in movies is discussed by Dani (2022), Normalita (2022), Turnip, Sihombing, and Purba (2022), and Xu (2022).

Men and women have many different styles of speech. The way how the women deliver their utterances shows the particular linguistic style that is evoked by them. Jespersen (1922) as cited in Broadbridge (2003) claims that women are more refined, rarely use rough words, and are more expressive in delivering the speech. However, men who are forced to listen to the nature of women's conversation will quickly feel bored. The variety of language styles depends on some social factors. According to Joos (1976, p.156), speech styles are defined as the language form used by the speaker, and it is categorized by the degree of formality.

The writers aimed to know the use of language styles by Lara Jean Convey in Sofia Alvarez's Film *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*. Two research problems were formulated in this research, namely (1) what types of language styles are used by Lara Jean Covey in Sofia Alvarez's film *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*? and (2) what are the social factors that influence Lara Jean Covey in using different language styles in Alvarez's film *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*?

Literature Review

Joos (1976) breaks down these speech styles into five forms. Each type has characterization and function: the first is the frozen style, which is usually used in formal ceremonies. The second is the formal style that is commonly used in an official meeting in some organizations. The third is the consultative style, which is usually used in schools and hospitals. The fourth, the casual style, is suitable for daily conversation, and the last is the intimate style commonly used in conversation among close friends or family members. The language style used depends on the culture's situation. Afriza (2017) stated that the application of language style variations is based on the environment in which the information has been conferred. Thus, the language used in an upper-class environment would be dissimilar from the style used in a lower-class environment. The environment also refers to stratification, such as gender, age, and other social status. Holmes (2001, p.1) proposed that how people speak is affected by the social situation in which they are talking. The participants, topic, setting, and function are the social factors that cover where we are talking and who can hear us, as well as our feelings toward our interlocutor.

Chaika (1982) as cited in Abidin (2018), stated that language style is a scheme of conversation arrangement. Society can choose various styles of language which can be a formal style or informal style. A language style is how the language is used by individuals to communicate, and it is used in verbal or non-verbal communication. It can be said that individuals can talk or interact with each other by applying a variation of language styles everywhere and whenever they want. Besides, Yule (1996) classified two types of speech styles. The first is a very formal style, and the second is a very informal style. For example, a formal style is applied

when people are going to job interviews, conferences, and official meetings. Differently, people are using an informal style when they want to speak with their friends or companions. It can be said that in a different style, people use different languages. Furthermore, their feelings toward the contexts of the situations can be shown by their language styles.

In this research, the writers focused on the language styles found in the *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* film that were used only by the main character in the film, Lara Jean Covey. The writer also analyses the social factors that influence Lara Jean Covey in using different styles of language styles. There are some reasons why the writer is interested in *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* film. First, *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*, the film gets a 97% rating based on 67 reviews on the review aggregation website Rotten Tomatoes. Also, Overbrook Entertainment is a production company owned by actor and producer, Will Smith, and Lassiters have optioned on the *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* novel. Second, Netflix has revealed that the film has gone on to become one of its “most viewed original films ever” (Ramsay, 2018). The trailer of the film already has more than 11.000.000 viewers on YouTube (Netflix, 2018). So, this film is famous among teenagers. Lara Jean Covey, the main character in this film, used some language styles, which are attractive to be investigated.

Lara Jean's characteristic is expressive; she does not think twice before speaking. In the film, she prefers to live in her immature personal fantasies rather than socialize with her friends (Love, n.d.). Lara Jean Covey as the main character in this film such a unique and smart girl. The writer wanted to conduct research entitled *An Analysis on The Language Styles Used by Lara Jean Covey in Alvarez's Film To All the Boys I've Loved Before* as study because this study focuses on language styles, especially in the verbal pattern which is taken from the script of *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* film. The writer chose to analyze the types of language styles by Joos' (1976) theory and supported by Francis' (1965) theory. The writer also used Holmes' (2001) theory to analyze the social factors that influence Lara Jean Covey in using different types of language styles.

Linguists proposed some theories discussing language variety. Harris (2017), stated that language, dialect, register, style, or other forms of language are involved in language variations. The use of the word “variation” refers to various forms to prevent the use of the term language, which by many people is only associated with standard language, and the term dialect, which is often associated with non-standard varieties. Non-standard varieties are considered less prestigious than the standard. Linguists discuss the standard as well as non-standard varieties. “Lect” avoids problems in ambiguous cases in deciding whether two varieties are different languages or dialects of one language. In English, the language style of formal and informal variety can be seen in the use of form and vocabulary (Tamsar, 2019). The use of whom, who, and which, as relative pronouns are complex sentence structures as well as use of whom as the question word is also regarded as an example of using formal English variety.

One of the media to unite society is the language. As human beings, people use language to communicate, tell, or show their feelings. Trudgill (2000) stated that social status could also be seen in language and often affects the vocabulary structure. The social perspective is influenced by language behaviour's aspects. The first aspect is the language function in building social relationships, and the second

is the language role in delivering the message relating to the speaker. Based on Tamsar (2019), Sociolinguistics is the part of linguistics which concerned with language things, social and cultural phenomena. In sociolinguistics, people know how and why language changes, when and why people in different communities use language varieties, the political aspect, and the educational aspect of the relationship between language and society. The relationship between language and society can be seen concerning specific languages from such a variation, styles of language, or dialect in its application to society. Previous studies by Fadhilah (2013), Iktafa (2013), and Prasetya (2018) analyzed language styles in movies. Based on those aspects above, the conclusion is that the style of language proves that language has a close relationship with society.

Method

This study is a content analysis. As Yang and Miller (2008) stated, “Content analysis is the systematization of text analysis, and underlying meanings and ideas are revealed by analyzing the pattern in elements of the text, such as words or phrases.” Further, they stated, “Content analysis allows the writer to test theoretical issues to enlarge the knowledge of the data. By applying content analysis, it is possible to distil words into fewer content-related categories.”

Furthermore, as Johnson et al. (2007) stated, “Mixed-methods research involves mixing within a single study; a mixed-method program would include mixing within a program of research, and the mixing might occur across a closely related set of studies.” The other definition of mixed research is from Bergman (2008) as cited in Pamekasih (2017), “mixed research is the mix of at least one quantitative and at least one qualitative element in a single research proposal.”

Additionally, a descriptive research design was selected to interpret the data because the data found in this study were analyzed descriptively based on the script of *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* film. Suroiya (2017) as cited in Abidin (2018), “Descriptive studies deal with explanations and information to describe the utterances expressed by the subjects.” Normalita (2022) found 22 slang styles and 39 colloquial styles in this movie.

Type and source of data

The data of this study were Lara Jean's utterances, Lara Jean's sentences, clauses, phrases without song lyrics, and expressions of Lara Jean Covey in *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* film. Whereas, the data sources of this study were *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* film and the film's script. The film was downloaded from the Internet, and the script of the film was taken from the Internet. After obtaining the script, the writer noted and listed the sentences spoken by Lara Jean Covey in the *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* film and then differentiated them based on Joos' (1976) theory, which has five types of language styles.

Data gathering technique

The data were gathered from the utterances of Lara Jean Covey during her interactions with other characters. The writer undertook several steps to collect the data. Firstly, the writer obtained the script of the film *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* from an available website, namely <https://transcripts.foreverdreaming.org/viewtopic.php?f=952&t=41484>. Next, the

writer reads the script while watching the film to verify and match the script's content with the actual movie. This step ensured the script's accuracy. Then, the writer watched the movie again to gain a deeper grasp of its content. The writer thoroughly read and comprehended the script. While doing so, the writer listed the utterances spoken by Lara Jean Covey and compiled them into a table. After listing the utterances, the writer finally analyzed the types of language styles used, highlighting and categorizing them into five categories according to Joos' (1976) theory. The final analysis focused on identifying and differentiating the language styles employed by Lara Jean Covey in her dialogue.

Data analysis technique

This section explained the data analysis techniques. The data were analyzed by the writer in a few steps. Here are the steps. First, the writer identified the data that express various language styles. The writer coded the data into different types based on Joos' (1976) theory to make the process of identification easier. The initials were given into the five distinct types of language styles. Below are the types: "Frozen style (FZS), Formal style (FS), Consultative style (CLS), Intimate style (IS), Casual style (CS)."

Second, data were classified and analyzed. The writer classified the data, which are indicated by language styles based on Joos' (1976) theory, which has five types. They are "frozen style, formal style, consultative style, intimate style, and casual style." The writer analyzed and described the meaning of each of them.

Results and Discussion

Language styles used by Lara Jean Covey

Consultative style

Datum 1 (00:26:08→00:26:12)

Waiter : "Anything for your friend?"

Lara Jean : "He's not with me."

This situation happened when Lara Jean visited a dinner alone, and suddenly Peter sat near her. The waiter suddenly came and asked Lara Jean whether she wanted to order something for Peter or not. Then Lara Jean said, "He's not with me." That sentence shows that Lara Jean's utterance applies the right grammatical pattern, and her pronunciation is understandable. She gave a short and direct answer to the waiter. That sentence represents that there is a distant relationship between the speaker. So, from the utterances above, the speakers tend to use the consultative style to deliver the speech.

After the writer analyzed the film transcript, The intimate style appeared 37 times in Lara Jean's utterances.

Intimate style

Datum 4 (00:17:35→00:17:47)

Kitty : "Don't you find it kinda depressing that it's Saturday night, and you're having a Golden Girls marathon with your little sister?"

Lara Jean : "No. I love the Golden Girls, and **I love hanging out with you.**"

The conversation happened when Kitty asked Lara Jean about how they spent Saturday night together. Kitty felt bored and thought that Lara Jean should go out with her friends rather than spend time with her sister and watch TV. Then Lara Jean said, “No. I love the Golden Girls, and I love hanging out with you.” Those utterances show that Lara Jean prefers to spend time with her sister than go out with her friends. So, that example is classified as an intimate style with family relationship characteristics.

Datum 12 (00:35:26→00:35:27)

Lara Jean : “Come on, **Kitty**. We’re gonna be late.”

Those examples above occurred between Lara Jean and her little sister, Kitty. This data is categorized as an intimate style with addressee characteristics. It can be seen when Lara Jean called her little sister, “Kitty” instead of her real name Katherine. The word “Kitty” shows the intimacy between Lara Jean and her little sister. Lara Jean puts the nickname “Kitty” to her little sister as a symbol of affection.

After the writer analyzed the film transcript, the intimate style appeared 37 times in Lara Jean’s utterances.

Casual style

Datum 12 (00:27:38→00:27:42)

Lara Jean : “He also got a letter, so you can see how awkward and complicated that’s **gonna** get if he thinks I like him.”

The example above is part of the conversation between Lara Jean and Peter. She told Peter that Josh also got a love letter from her. They were talking at a cafe. The situation was not formal. She also used the informal language of “going to”. Instead of saying “going to”, she said, “gonna”. So, that example is included as a casual style.

Datum 60 (00:08:17)

Lara Jean : “Nope. Nope.”

The example above is one of the sentences spoken by Lara Jean when she was talking with her sister, Margot. They were at the airport before Margot went to Scotland. Lara Jean said, “Nope. Nope” to Margot. She used the slang language. The standard spelling of “nope” is “no”. She said that because she did not agree with Margot’s decision. So, that example is included as a casual style. The results showed the casual style appeared 84 times in Lara Jean’s utterances.

To determine the percentage use of various language styles by Lara Jean, the writer first counted the total number of sentences she delivered. Subsequently, each category was divided by this total to ascertain its proportion. This quotient was then multiplied by 100 to convert it into a percentage. Finally, the author compiled these percentages for each type of language style and organized them into a table to facilitate easier comprehension of the measurement results for the reader.

Lara Jean delivered 450 sentences. The frozen style and the formal style do not appear in Lara Jean’s utterances. The consultative style only appeared twice in Lara Jean’s utterances. The intimate style appeared 37 times in Lara Jean’s

utterances. The casual style appeared 84 times in Lara Jean’s utterances. Below is the table of the results.

Table 1. Data on the use of language styles by Lara Jean Covey

| No | Types of Language Style | Number of Utterances | Percentage |
|-------|-------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| 1 | “Frozen Style” | 0 | 0% |
| 2 | “Formal Style” | 0 | 0% |
| 3 | “Consultative Style” | 2 | 1.62% |
| 4 | “Intimate Style” | 37 | 30.08% |
| 5 | “Casual Style” | 84 | 68.30% |
| Total | | 123 | 100% |

Table 1 shows the data on the use of language styles used by Lara Jean in Alvarez’s film *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before*. We can see that she used much “casual style” in the film, i.e. 68.30%, while the least types she used were “frozen style” and “formal style” which are 0%. Lara Jean even did not use those types at all in the film. Overall, Lara Jean used 60% (the number of language style types used by Lara Jean divided by the language styles according to Joos’ theory and multiplied by 100) of Joo’s types of language styles.

In the first research problem, we see that Lara Jean used three of five types of language style according to Joos (1976). From the results, we can see the most dominant type of language style used by Lara Jean. The writer did the calculation, and the percentages show that the casual style is the most dominant language style that Lara Jean used in the movie.

Lara Jean’s character tended to speak “informally and used casual style” in the film. Lara Jean liked to be friendly, which means Lara Jean wanted to make other characters closer to her, and in the film, there was no scene where Lara Jean needed to use “frozen style” and “formal style”.

Social factors in using different language styles

This section addresses the first research question, which is to discover the types of language styles used by Lara Jean Covey in *To All the Boys I’ve Love Before* film. The theories that were used to analyze the language styles used by Lara Jean Covey are from Joos (1976) and Francis (1965). There are five types of language style, namely, “frozen style, formal style, casual style, consultative style, and intimate style.” Based on the findings, there are three types of language styles used by Lara Jean Covey, namely “consultative style, intimate style, and casual style.”

This section also wraps up the answer to the second research question. The second research question is what are the social factors that influence Lara Jean Covey in using different language styles in Alvarez’s film *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before*? After analyzing the types of language styles that were used by the character in the film, the writer tries to explore the factors that influence her to use different language styles. To discover this case, the writer considers the social context which is involved in communication. Four aspects influence the people to speak in different language styles based on Holmes’ (2001) theory. Holmes (2001, p.1) shared the idea that “how people speak is affected by the social situation in which they are talking, which includes the participants, topic, setting, and function.”

These are the social factors of where we are talking and who can hear us, as well as our feelings toward our interlocutor.

Conclusions

Based on the preceding discussion, the writer can draw two major conclusions. First, the writer identified three distinct types of language styles used by Lara Jean in Sofia Alvarez's film *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*. The three distinct types of language styles are "consultative, intimate, and casual style." Referring to Joos' theory (1976), Lara Jean used 60% of types of language style in Sofia Alvarez's film *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*. Moreover, among the three types that were used by her, "casual style" frequently appeared in sentences that were spoken or delivered by her. Then, the least types that were used by her are "frozen style" and "formal style". "Frozen style" and "formal style" are never used by her in the film *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*.

The percentage shows that Lara Jean used a 68.30% casual style in the film. "Frozen" and "formal style" are never used by Lara Jean in the film. The percentage of the use of those types is 0%. The reason for the use of casual style was to make the atmosphere more relaxed and not inflexible. Second, based on the findings, four social factors influence Lara Jean Covey in using different language styles in the film. They are "participant, setting, topic, and function."

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