
An Analysis of Formal Language Style in *The American President* Movie.

Shofya Shadrina^{1*}

Devi Hellystia²

^{1,2}Department of English Literature, Faculty of Letters and Cultures,
Gunadarma University, INDONESIA

Abstract

Language style serves as a supplementary instrument for individuals to partake in dialogue, drawing upon their speaking proficiency to align with the context and subject matter of the discourse. Using Martin Joss's theory (1967), this research aims to find out the characteristics of formal language style that occur in the utterances in the American President movie. Descriptive qualitative method was used as the research design to analyze the characteristics of formal language style in the American President movie. The results of this research found 195 data which are presented in three points. The respectful tone (11), polite tone (21), avoid contraction of level grammar (22), avoid run-on sentence of level grammar (7), efficient words of level grammar (8), complete sentence of level grammar (113), and formal modal of level grammar (13). This means that the complete sentence of level grammar is prominently proved to be used in communication withing formal language style used in American President movie. based in the result of the research, it is fruitful to suggest the students of English Department to do further analysis about the five language styles used in other resources like movies, novels, or article that contain about the politics.

Keywords: *Language Style, Formal Language Style, Characteristics, Movies Characters.*

^{1*}Corresponding author, email: devi_hellystia@staff.gunadarma.ac.id

Shadrina, S., & Hellystia, D. (2023). An Analysis of Formal Language Style in The American President Movie. *JADEs Journal of Academia in English Education*, 4(2). 208-220

Received Sept 5th, 2023; Revised Dec 20th, 2023; Accepted Dec 30th, 2023

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32505/jades.v4i2.7005>

©Name of University. IAIN Langsa.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a fundamental form of human communication that is simple for others to understand. According to Hornby (2000:721), language is a means by which citizens of a particular nation express their thoughts and feelings through gestures, symbols, and sounds. The idea is put across that language can be seen as a social construction. This is social life, and because language cannot be separated from society, language is an important tool in human life. Society can choose different types of alternative languages. The society in which a person lives has an impact on how they use language. Language style refers to a person's manner of language use. Language style is the way a person uses various expressions to communicate their thoughts and feelings.

Body language and spoken and written language are two categories of language that are frequently used. Language usage involves the use of patterned sounds, gestures, and signals. Conversation, speech, storytelling, discussion, radio, and television broadcasts are all examples of spoken language in use. Poems, newspapers, comics, articles, novels, letters, and books all frequently use written language. While spoken language is shorter, and easier to understand, and the ideas tend to be grouped into features like chunking, backchannels, and other similar features, written language tends to use longer, more complex sentences.

Language style is the way a person conveys their thoughts and feelings with different expressions. Joos (1976) stated that there are five language styles; frozen style, formal style, consultative style, casual style and intimate style. A frozen style, such as a palace, church, speech of state ceremony, or other occasions, may call for the use of the frozen style. A formal style of language is one that is appropriate for important or serious situations. The consultative communication style is used when speaking

to a stranger or in other semiformal communication situations. The term "casual style" refers to a manner of speaking that is appropriate for conversations between friends outside of the classroom and, occasionally, family members. A language that has only been developed within families, between lovers, and among the closest friends is intimate style.

One of the ways to know language style is by watching a movie. Movie, also known as film is a type of visual communication using moving pictures and sound to tell stories as an entertainment (Maraden, 2016). The conversations in movies are presented by the actors by reciting the dialogues written from the movie script. For those reasons, a movie is an entertaining way of formal learning language styles. The writer decided to conduct a study about analyzing the five language styles used in the American President movie based on Joos's (1976) theory.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Language Style

Language styles can be observed through mediums like movies. A movie, also referred to as a film, employs dynamic visuals and sound to narrate stories for entertainment purposes (Maraden, 2016). The interactions within movies are enacted by actors who deliver lines derived from the screenplay. Hence, movies offer an enjoyable approach to formally grasp various language styles. This research decided to conduct research about found out the formal language style that occur in the utterances of characters in the American President movie and to analyse the characteristics of formal language style that occur in the utterances of characters in the American President movie. based on Joos's (1976) theory.

Language style is the way a person conveys their thoughts and feelings with different expressions. Joos (1976) stated that there are five language styles; frozen style, formal style, consultative style, casual style and intimate style. A frozen style, such as a palace, church, speech of state ceremony, or other occasions, may call for the use of the frozen style. A formal style of language is one that is appropriate for important or serious situations. The consultative communication style is used when speaking to a stranger or in other semiformal communication situations. The casual style refers to a manner of speaking that is suitable for discussions among friends in informal settings outside of the school environment and, at times, among family members. A language that has only been talked only with families, lovers, even the closest friends is intimate style.

2.2. Formal Language Style 1

According to Joos (1976), In formal situations, minimal background information is exchanged, and communication primarily involves one-way interaction with limited or no audience input, are where formal style is typically used. It suggests that standard speech is used, that the vocabulary for formal style is extensive, that speech is spoken slowly, and that repetition is avoided. During important or substantial circumstances, like in academic and technical papers, presentations, official addresses, and religious teachings, a formal style is generally employed. Nevertheless, it can also be utilized when conversing with an individual listener, such as when conversing with a stranger. (Rosida, 2008).

According to Richards (as cited in Putri, Fitriasia, & Syamaun, 2021), The formal language style categorized as the kind of language usage that occurs when speakers exercise extreme care in their word selection, pronunciation, and sentence construction. It is typically used in significant or grave circumstances, such as in academic settings and formal speeches, technical reports, and sermons. A single topic, using a

sentence structure that shows less intimacy between the speaker and listener, and using standard forms are the three characteristics of a formal style. For instance (Arya, 2022):

Emily: *Your company works with some of the biggest brands in the luxury sector, from Chanel to YSL. and that makes Savoir, your company, or, If I may be so bold, our company, a brand in itself. but build a brand, you must create meaningful social media engagement.*

2.2.1 Some Characteristics That Indicate the Use of Formal Language Style

According to Dumaine Deborah (2003), formal language is typically focused on a single subject and is associated with the technical nature of formal writing. There are also typical characteristics of formal language style are: (a) A respectful tone. (b) Polite tone. (c) Avoid contractions. (d) Avoid run-on sentence. (e) Aim for an effective use of words. (f) Complete sentence. (g) Modality.

There have been many discussions about language style in previous studies. The aims of this research are to found out the characteristics of formal language style and to describe the function of speaker utterance in using formal language style which are used by the characters in the American President movie. This research found there are three previous research to help this research in analyzing data of language style:

The first previous research was written by Rois Lailatun to analyze the research entitled An Analysis of Language Style Used in "Mulan" Movie by Niki Caro. In this research, this research used a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the types of language style that was used in the "Mulan" movie according to Martin Joos Theory (2007) and Mandel Kiszner (2003). They found there are five language styles used in the Mulan Movie, which is Frozen style, Formal style, Consultative style, Casual style, and Colloquial style. There are 27 sentences in the

conversation that indicate frozen style, 116 sentences in the conversation that show a formal style, 53 sentences in the conversation that show a casual style, and 46 sentences in conversation that show colloquial style.

The second previous research was written by Alicia and Fakhri took their thesis titled *An Analysis of Language Style in "To All the Boys I've Loved Before" Movie*. The aims of this research are to describe the kinds of language style used and find out the most frequent language style used in "To All the Boys I've Loved Before" movie. They used a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the types of language style that used in "To All the Boys I've Loved Before" movie according to Martin Joos theory. The result shows that there are 30 pieces of data from the conversation in "To All the Boys I've Loved Before" movie to perform the language styles. The research has found the intimate style is the type of style that occurs dominantly and has been collected in 30 cases, intimate style has 11 cases, consultative style has 9 cases, casual style has 7 cases, formal style has 3 cases, and frozen style has not been found.

The third previous research was written by Sherina to analyze the research entitled *An Analysis of Language Style Used in the Dialogue in Business Proposal Series*. The research used a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the types of language style used in the Business Proposal according Martin Joos. The research has found that there are 144 dialogues in 10 episodes of the series that consist of 80 dialogues in consultative style, 55 dialogues in casual style, 6 dialogues in intimate style, and 3 dialogues in formal style. research find that the language style employed by the central characters arises from social elements such as the age and status of participants, the environments of homes and workplaces, humorous and weighty subjects, and the purposes of information sharing and inquiry.

From the explanation on the three previous study above, we know that two of them are using the same method which is a descriptive qualitative method. Also, the three previous writers have the five language styles according to Martin Joos. This research is closely related to previous study. In this research, this research only focused on analyzing the formal language style that exists in the character in the American President movie. This research also only focused on the formal language style used by the president to the subordinates, formal language style used by the president to the media, and formal language style used by the subordinates to the president, because most of all previous studies, none of them explain in detail the language style used only the formal style of language style, and none of them research in detail the characteristics used in language style.

This research is expected to enrich the nature of science, especially in the field of literature in language style. This research hopes that this research can add insight on how to analyze the movie in terms of language style, especially as it appears in movies. To more understand the characteristics of the formal style used in the American President movie. This research is intended for those who are interested in sociolinguistics analysis and are interested in making this topic of discussion in study.

3. METHODS

This study used a descriptive qualitative method as the research data approach because the writer analyzed the data in the form of words descriptively. Qualitative is an inductive approach and its goal is to gain a deeper understanding of a persons or groups experience. The use of a descriptive qualitative method is highly suitable in this case as it recognizes the subjective nature of the problem and the diverse experiences of the participants. It also ensures that the results directly

reflect or closely resemble the terminology employed in the study (Bradshaw et al., 2017).

The source of data for this research is American President movie. This movie was written by Rob Reiner and published on 17 November 1995.

Data collection procedures were applied to focus on the workflow of the research and to make sure that the results were in line with the objective of the research. The procedures involve; (1) Observing the story line of American President movie from the beginning until the end of the movie. (2) Collecting data of formal language style from the American President movie. The process of collecting data started with transcribing the dialogue contains the use of formal language style which adapted from Joos's theory. (3) Screening erroneous data and classifying the valid ones.

Once the data analysis was done to explore the issues of the research as they did as state in the objectives of the researches. The technique of data analysis involved (1) Interpreting the data which was done to describe the significance findings of formal language style that appeared in the dialogue of the American President movie. (2) Discussing the current finding of the research which related to problem of the research and the previous studies. (3) Making implication after the findings were discuss. It was done to explain how the current finding maybe important to give contribution for further exploration on the area of formal language style. of the research gives the importance

4. RESULTS

The result of the study is the formal language style used by the President to the Subordinate, formal language style used by the President to the Media, and formal language style used by the Subordinate to the

President in the American President movie. The results of this research found 195 data which are presented in three points. The first is the respectful tone (11), and polite tone (21) in the American President movie. The second is avoid contraction of level grammar (22), avoid run-on sentence of level grammar (7), efficient words of level grammar (8), complete sentence of level grammar (113), and formal modal of level grammar (13) in the American President movie.

Table 1.
Formal Language Style Found in *The American President* Movie

Formal Language Style	Tone		Level Grammar of Formal style				
	Respectful	Polite	Avoid Contraction	Avoid Run-on sentence	Efficient words	Complete sentence	Formal modal
President to the Subordinate	9	4	9	3	4	42	5
President to the Media	2	0	7	3	2	21	0
Subordinate to the President	0	17	6	1	2	50	8
Total						195	

5. DISCUSSION

Formal Language Style used by the President to the Subordinate.

This research focused in three things, which is formal language style used by the President to the Subordinate, formal language style used by the President to the Media, and formal language style used by the Subordinate to the President, because these three things are the most used in the American President movie. The data is sorted from the most characteristic applications in each utterance because the more characteristics applied, the more accurate the data is with high formality.

Excerpt 1

President: *Janie, would you show Ms. Wade to the rec room, please?*
(00:18:21,018 - 00:18:23,854)

The respectful and polite tone is applied in the utterance that when the President said “*would you show Ms. Wade to the rec room, please?*” which is it shows the respect towards Ms. Wade, as stated in Yuniati (2020), in research about the speech style analysis of main character in brave movie script, stated that formal style is designed to inform and background is woven text into text in complex sentences. The leading code-label is ‘*May*’, or ‘*Might*’ or ‘*Can*’ and the ‘*Mr*’ or ‘*Sir*’ when addressing someone or calls someone with last name. The polite tone is also can be seen when the President said “*would*” and “*please*” which contains the word asking for help against someone with low tempo.

Complete sentence is applied in the utterance that the President’s sentence above shows the characteristics contain in using complete sentence, as stated in as said by Hamdany & Damanhuri (2017), whose research Speech Style Used in The Workplace In 500 Days of Summer Movie, stated that the vocabulary which is used in formal style is use standard complete grammar, and use low tempo.

Formal modal verb is applied in the utterance because the modal verb which focus on the modal auxiliaries, justify the conversation consist of formal style in the dialogue is the use of formal modality verb. The finding is in line with Zugno (2018), whose research modality in academic writing: learners' and expert writers' use of hedges and boosters in English which is the same as this research in discusses the use of formal modal verb in the movie. It can be concluded, that the word “*would*” used by the President in the utterance is consist to formal modal verb.

4.2.2 Formal Language Style used by the President to the Media.

Excerpt 4

President: *“We have serious problems to solve, and we need serious people to solve them.”* (01:41:34,595 - 01:41:39,725)

Avoiding the use of contraction applied in the utterance that when the president prefers choose to say “we have” than say “we’ve” which used when the sentence is full without any omission from squeezing two words into one unit. This finding is in line with Rasyidi (2022), whose research analysis of formal language style used in Mark Zuckerberg’s speech, stated that in sentences containing specific characteristic of formal style of avoiding the form of repetition of words and contractions.

Avoiding the run-on sentence applied in the utterance because the sentence “We have serious problems to solve, and we need serious people to solve them” using the comma in the sentence after for separating the two independent clauses. This finding is in line with Schiess (2011), who states in the blog of run-on sentences that to properly join two independent clauses, it could use a comma with coordinating conjunction like and, or, for, but, or a period in creating two sentences.

Complete sentence applied in the utterance because the president sentence above describes where all sentence structures do not contain slang, or abbreviate a word, which it is the Characteristic of formal language style including avoiding the form of repetition of words and contractions are words without repetition in sentences, as well as the absence of abbreviations as declared by Joos (as cited in Dewi & Aulina, 2022)

4.2.2 Formal Language Style used by the Subordinate to the President.

Excerpt 7

President: “Mr. President. We have a secure call from the sit room.”
(00:54:16,131 - 00:54:17,382)

Polite tone applied in the utterance because the subordinate having a low tempo to starting the conversation, this finding is in line with Ferbriani, Ras, and Novitri (2019), whose research an analysis of language style in to all the boys I’ve loved before movie. the research stated that the

polite tone can be proved from the commonly accepted format, such as “Mr”, or “Ms” when addressing someone.

Avoiding the use of contraction because the subordinates choose to say “we have” than choose to say “we’ve” in the sentence where the characteristic of formal language style including avoiding the form of repetition of words and contractions are words without repetition in sentences, as well as the absence of abbreviations as declared by Joos (as cited in Dewi & Aulina, 2022).

Complete sentence applied in the utterance because the subordinate speaks with structural grammar and nothing word be shortened, or using the slang words. As stated in Schaffner (2002) whose research the role of discourse analysis for translation and in translation training, which said that a formal language style used to be well structured, logically, sequenced, and strongly coherent formal or deliberative style is used for important or serious situation. Therefore, it can be concluded that the subordinates use the complete sentence.

6. CONCLUSION

After identifying and explaining the results of the study, this research describes the conclusion about the use of formal language style found in the American President movie. The 7 used of formal language style found in this research are, formal language style used by the President to the Subordinate, formal language style used by the President to the Media, formal language style used by the Subordinate to the President. In the story line, the conversation between the president with the subordinates, the president’s speech to the media, and the subordinate to the president is the most frequently spoken dialogue in the movie. Also, the formal language style used by the president to the subordinate has several characteristics in utterance, in which, the more characteristics

that are applied in one utterance, the more accurate the formal language style data is.

7. REFERENCES

- Coupland, N. (2007). *Style (Language Variation and Identity)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dumaine, D. (2003). *Instant-Answer Guide to Business Writing*. New York: Writers Club Press.
- Haynes, J. (2006). *Style (Language Workbooks)*. London: Taylor & Francis eLibrary.
- Holmes, J. (2013). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. New York: Longman.
- Hornby, A. (2000). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (sixth edition ed.)*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Joos, M. (1967). *The five clocks*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.
- Keraf, G. (2006). *Diksi dan Gaya Bahasa*. Jakarta: PT. Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- The American President. (2023). Retrieved from IMDb: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0112346/>.
- Utama, M. A., & Abdullah. (2022). *Speech Style of the Main Character in the hobbit: the desolation of smug movies*. Makassar: Universitas Negeri Makassar. Retrieved from <https://ojs.unm.ac.id/Eliterate/article/download/40682/19480>
- Zugno, M. T. (2018). *modality in academic writing: learners' and expert writers' use of hedges and boosters in English*. *Academia*, 95