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## **A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE STYLE IN *GHOSTBUSTERS: FROZEN EMPIRE* 2024 FILM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research aims to describe the types of language styles used by the main characters in *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* (2024) and determine the dominant style using Martin Joos's (1976) theoretical framework. This study employs a qualitative descriptive method with content analysis based on systematic observation of dialogue and scenes involving the main characters. The findings reveal that the main characters utilise three of Joos's five language styles: Consultative, Casual, and Intimate. The most dominant is the Casual Style (31 data), characterised by frequent slang, contractions, ellipsis, and sarcasm. Its dominance, followed by the Intimate Style (12 data), aligns with the film's supernatural comedy-family genre, which prioritises intimate family interactions, spontaneous humour, and efficient team communication in high-stakes situations. The absence of the Formal and Frozen Styles among the main characters is significant, as contexts requiring these styles are delegated to supporting characters. The Consultative Style is minimal (1 datum), functioning solely to convey complex technical information. Overall, the findings reinforce that the dominant language style in a film is strongly shaped by its genre and core narrative focus.

**Keywords:** Sociolinguistics, Language Style, Martin Joos, *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire*.

### **ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan jenis-jenis gaya bahasa yang digunakan oleh karakter utama dalam film *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* (2024) dan menentukan gaya bahasa yang paling dominan, menggunakan kerangka teoretis Martin Joos (1976). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik analisis konten berdasarkan observasi sistematis terhadap dialog dan adegan yang melibatkan karakter utama. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa karakter utama dalam *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* menggunakan tiga dari lima gaya bahasa Martin Joos, yaitu: Konsultatif (Consultative Style), Kasual (Casual Style),

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dan Intim (Intimate Style). Gaya bahasa yang ditemukan paling dominan adalah Gaya Kasual (31 data), yang ditandai oleh penggunaan slang, kontraksi, ellipsis, dan sarkasme. Kemudian diikuti oleh Gaya Intim (12), sangat selaras dengan filmnya yang bergenre supernatural komedi-keluarga, mengutamakan interaksi keluarga yang intim, humor spontan, dan komunikasi tim yang efisien dalam situasi berisiko tinggi. Tidak adanya Gaya Formal dan Gaya Beku pada karakter utama ditemukan sangat signifikan, karena konteks yang menuntut kedua gaya tersebut diemban oleh karakter pendukung. Gaya Konsultatif ditemukan minimal (1 data), berfungsi untuk menyampaikan informasi teknis yang kompleks. Secara keseluruhan, temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa gaya bahasa yang dominan dalam sebuah film sangat dipengaruhi oleh genre dan fokus naratifnya.

**Kata Kunci:** Sociolinguistik, Gaya Bahasa, Martin Joos, *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire*.

## A. INTRODUCTION

Language is an important aspect of human communication, both directly and through media, including film. Films not only serve as entertainment but also as a reflection of social interaction, identity, and relationships between individuals. Sociolinguistic studies emphasise how language reflects norms, social identities, and specific communication contexts (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021). One aspect that influences audience understanding and experience is style, which represents variations in language use based on situation, purpose, and relationships among speakers (More, 2004).

Language style is an important aspect of sociolinguistics because it shows how people adjust their way of speaking depending on the situation, social roles, and relationships involved. Films provide useful data for this kind of analysis since their dialogues, although scripted, still represent realistic and meaningful interactions between characters. Several previous studies using Martin Joos's theory, such as research on *Home Alone 2* (Silta et al., 2023), *Soul* (Ricca, 2022), and *Wonder* (Rosyda, 2021), found that casual and consultative styles are the most commonly used, especially in family-oriented or animated films. However, these studies focus mainly on drama and children's genres, leaving limited research on how language style appears in science fiction comedy films. To fill this gap, the present study examines the language styles used by the main characters in *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* (2024) and explores how these styles support the film's humour, character interactions, and overall narrative.

This research aims to describe the types of language styles used by the main characters and identify the most dominant style in the film *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* (2024). By utilising a descriptive qualitative approach and Martin Joos' theory as an analytical framework, this research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to sociolinguistic studies as well as practical benefits for the audience, by enhancing understanding, appreciation, and critical engagement with language use in contemporary film narratives.

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## B. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Film

Film is a visual narrative medium that presents stories through a combination of audio and visual elements. It serves not only as entertainment but also as a representation of social and cultural phenomena, reflecting human identities, norms, and interactions (Klarer, 2013).

Films employ narrative techniques such as flashbacks, foreshadowing, and temporal manipulation to construct plot and emphasise characters or themes. Analysing films through literary criticism allows for understanding language use and communication styles in visual contexts (Klarer, 2013).

### 2. Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between language and society, examining how language reflects social identity, norms, and communicative contexts (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021).

This field emphasises how language is used in everyday interactions, how societal norms and policies affect language, and the role of language in shaping social relationships and individual identity expressions (Holmes & Wilson, 2022).

### 3. Language Style

Language style refers to variations in language use that reflect context, communicative goals, and speaker relationships (Llamas, Mullany & Stockwell, 2006). It helps understand how individuals adjust their communication according to social situations. Martin Joos (1967) classifies language styles into five categories: Frozen style refers to extremely formal and fixed language typically found in ceremonial situations or official documents. Formal style is used in academic or professional settings and is characterised by complete sentence structures and precise grammar. Consultative style is a semi-formal style commonly used in interactions where information is exchanged, such as conversations between teachers and students or doctors and patients. Casual style is an informal approach that appears in relaxed interactions among friends or family, often featuring slang, contractions, or incomplete sentences. Lastly, intimate style involves private and personal language shared between individuals who have a close relationship, usually expressed through affectionate terms or shared codes.

## B. METHODS

### 1. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, focusing on language style analysis. Qualitative research is suitable for exploring how language is used in context, allowing the researcher to interpret social interactions and linguistic patterns (Denzin & Lincoln, 2016). The descriptive qualitative approach is used to provide a detailed explanation of the types of language styles observed in the film. Descriptive qualitative analysis aims to describe, classify, and interpret the data in its natural context without employing statistical procedures. This method allows the

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researcher to present language styles as they occur in the dialogue of the main characters in *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* (2024).

## 2. Data and Data Sources

The primary data sources are the film *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* (2024) and its script. The data consist of dialogues among the main characters that illustrate specific language styles according to Martin Joos's theory (1967).

## 3. Research Instruments

The researcher acts as the primary instrument, responsible for observing, categorising, and interpreting the data. This approach ensures direct engagement with the material and enables contextual understanding of language use (Bogdan et al., 1997).

## 4. Data Collection

The data were collected using a systematic observational technique, involving the following steps:

- Watching the film thoroughly to identify relevant dialogues.
- Selecting and highlighting scenes that display clear examples of language styles.
- Recording dialogues related to the research question for further classification.

## 5. Data Analysis

The data analysis follows the model by Miles and Huberman (1994), which includes three concurrent processes:

- Data Reduction - Selecting, focusing, and categorising dialogue into the five language style types (frozen, formal, consultative, casual, intimate) to highlight patterns and relevant examples.
- Data Display - Organising the data in tables and charts for clear representation of each language style type in specific scenes.
- Conclusion Drawing - Interpreting patterns, regularities, and relationships among the language styles to determine the dominant style and its function in character interaction and narrative development.

## C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Findings

According to Martin Joos (1967), speech styles are categorised into five levels: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. Each style reflects not only linguistic form but also the social relationship and situational context between speakers. This section presents the findings of the analysis using representative data from the film *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* (2024), followed by a discussion on how these speech styles are employed by the main characters.

#### a. Casual Style

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Casual style is the language of friends, peers, or close acquaintances. It is marked by the use of slang, ellipsis, and informal vocabulary. The sentences are often incomplete but are still easily understood because of shared background knowledge. This style signals familiarity and solidarity.

## Data 2

Phoebe : **So a photon is checking into a hotel**  
Trevor : **Can we not do jokes right now, please? I feel like I'm gonna puke.**  
Callie : **Red light! Red light!** (Gil Kenan, 2024)

This scene takes place immediately after the near-miss incident with a cyclist. Although tension briefly arises between Grooberson and Callie, the attention in the car shifts to the interaction between Phoebe and Trevor and the ongoing crisis on the road. Phoebe initiates this side interaction with a personal joke, using a scientific term ('photon'), which serves to build social bonding and elicit light humour among siblings. The joke also indicates shared background knowledge of science within the Spengler family. Trevor's frustration with Grooberson's driving triggers a distracted response to the joke. At the same time, Callie issues an emergency warning as Grooberson ignores a red light. The entire scene is classified as Casual Style because it contains several strong markers of familiarity in an extremely informal situation. Trevor's annoyed response is marked by the use of slang contractions like "I'm gonna" (a non-standard form of going to), which emphasises the high level of familiarity that allows for the use of simplified language forms. Meanwhile, Callie's warning, "Red light! Red light!", which is a rapid repetition rather than a complete formal warning sentence, is an essential characteristic of Casual Style operating under pressure. This repetition conveys urgency while maintaining lexical efficiency, which can only be instantly understood due to the high level of familiarity and mutual understanding between Grooberson and Callie.

## b. Consultative Style

Consultative style occurs in semi-formal situations, where speakers interact with a degree of respect but also spontaneity. This style is often found in conversations between teachers and students, doctors and patients, or colleagues. It includes politeness markers such as “please” or “thank you,” as well as explanatory phrases to ensure mutual understanding

## Data 40

Phoebe : **Our proton packs use nickel and zinc as primary drivers for spectral agitation. But Garraka is different. The ancient ghost trappers used brass to trap him. If I brass-plate the components of my pack, it could give us a chance.**  
(Gil Kenan, 2024)



When Phoebe is about to start creating a new tool that is more effective and powerful to trap Garraka, the ghost king, who has escaped from his own trap and entered the human dimension, causing chaos in New York City that leads to riots and many casualties, Phoebe explains that their proton pack uses nickel and zinc as the primary drivers for spectral agitation. And the ancient ghost trappers used brass to trap it, and Phoebe plans to combine both so that the chances of trapping Garraka are greater. In this study, one piece of data was found that is classified as a consultative style used by Phoebe in this film. Phoebe provides specialised background information to ensure mutual understanding in a semi-formal, problem-solving-oriented context, using a narration voice which is intended for viewers. This aligns with the consultative style type, which, for communicating with individuals with whom the speaker does not yet share a close relationship. The topics discussed are highly technical, with specific engineering required to deal with Garraka, a unique ghost. Phoebe acts to bridge the existing information gaps

### c. Intimate Style

Intimate style is used among family members, close friends, or partners. It is characterised by private codes, pet names, or utterances that may appear incomplete or vague to outsiders but carry strong emotional meaning for those involved. Intonation and non-verbal cues often play a key role in this style.

#### Data 7

Trevor	: Wonderful news from the back seat. The windows are stuck.
Phoebe	: I can open a door.
Calie	: <b>No, no, no. No! No, Pheeb, no. We said!</b> (Gil Kenan, 2024)

When Trevor complained about the stuck window, it was followed by a quick response from Phoebe, who tried to open the door. In this dangerous situation, Callie and Grooberson immediately panicked and shouted at Phoebe: "No, no, no. No! No, Pheeb, no, we said!" This outcry reflects urgency and desperation. The use of shortened nicknames ('Pheeb' instead of Phoebe) in this emergency is a strong indicator of Intimate Style. This unique and familiar nickname shows a high level of personal closeness between them.

## 2. Discussion

The study aimed to identify the language styles used by the main characters in *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* (2024) based on Martin Joos's (1967) classification. Three styles were found: consultative, casual, and intimate, with the casual style emerging as the dominant form, consistent with the film's humorous and unusual family genre. Frozen and formal styles did not appear in the main characters' speech but were used by supporting characters in ritualistic scenes (frozen) and in authoritative or public communication, such as news reports (formal). The consultative style appeared only once, when Phoebe explained her plan for building a stronger trap, aligning with the style's function for semi-formal, informative

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exchanges. The findings also show that multiple styles can appear within a single interaction, such as when Callie uses an intimate tone with her children, who respond casually as part of their shift toward autonomy in adolescence. Casual style is also prominent in exchanges between Grooberson and the children, reflecting both relational adjustment and Grooberson's attempt to ease the dynamics within their blended family. Intimate style occurs when characters share strong emotional bonds within the family and the Ghostbusters team. Overall, the dominance of casual style aligns with the film's themes of humour, family interaction, and teamwork, echoing findings in similar genres such as *Home Alone* (Geroda & Pane, 2023). In contrast, films focused on emotional depth, such as *Wonder* (Rosyda, 2021), tend to favor intimate style, while consultative style appears more in academic or instructional contexts (Zahra et al., 2025). This study contributes a new perspective by examining a science-fiction comedy, showing how characters shift fluidly between casual and intimate styles to balance action, humour, and emotional connection.

#### D. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to describe the kinds of language styles used by the main characters in the film *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* (2024) and identify the dominant style, utilising Martin Joos's (1967) theory of the Five Clocks.

The analysis successfully identified three styles, namely Consultative, Casual, and Intimate, with the Casual Style being the most dominant. This dominance confirms that the core communication among the main characters, who function as a family unit and an intimate team, operates at the highest level of familiarity. This is evidenced by linguistic efficiency through ellipsis, contractions (e.g., I'm gonna), and the use of in-group jargon (inside jokes and brief technical terms). Furthermore, the presence of Intimate Style markers (such as specific address forms: "Trev," "Pheeb") is crucial for affirming emotional bonds and relational roles. And also the Consultative style, when Phoebe explained the plan to modify the trap for Garraka. Conversely, the absence of the Formal and Frozen Styles is significant. It highlights that the film's context as an adventure comedy focused on spontaneous action and family relations does not require rigid, non-participatory, or ceremonial language, instead prioritising speed, verbal comfort, and emotional realism in every interaction.

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