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## **Language Style in Opinion Pages of Three Popular Mass Media**

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### **Abstract**

*The language style is the way humans communicate with others through spoken and written. Human communicates with the language style that depends on the cultural ideology and the context of the situation. This study was aimed to find out the kind of language styles in three popular mass media. The data source of this study was selected from newspapers mainly on opinion pages. The method to analyze the study was descriptive qualitative. The instruments used to analyze the study were note-taking. To analyze the data source, the writer used the theory of Joos (1967) that discusses language style. The result of the analysis shows that the three newspaper articles use a different type of language style. Two articles use formal style while one other article applies casual style. The writer concludes that formal style often appears in newspapers because of considering the discussion field and the target readers. Articles using the formal style provide the style that seems rigid with the dense sentence structure that is suitable according to the issue grabbed from the surroundings.*

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**Keywords:** *language style, mass media, sociolinguistic.*

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## INTRODUCTION

In communication, every human has their own way of conveying the message to another individual in the social interaction. The style used obviously seems by means of the way they apply the language such as intonation, rhythm, choice of words, and structure of the sentence. There are differences between women and men in the way they speak. Those also happen with educated and non-educated people when doing the communication. On several occasions, people prefer to use formal language when they are in a formal situation. Otherwise, casual language is applied in the relaxed situation to converse with a family member or close friends. How they utter the language also can create the language style that seems polite, friendly, and warm. The use of style in social interaction basically relies on each individual and the situation when the communication is held. Therefore, the diversity of style in the communication of every human oftentimes happens that is known as the language variation.

The phenomenon of language variation that occurs between social man and language in linguistics is known as social meaning (sociolinguistics). According to Gennety (2004:243), the social meaning of language generally relies on cultural ideology from the community they have and also how they use language in their social life thereupon the style of language is not determined based on the arbitrarily of the individual. People normally communicate with the community by using a language style that already adheres to the social and culture of the speakers. Every culture of the community has its own uniqueness represented by means of the language style used in the communication. One community is considered to have a different language style from other communities. Even different language style is also found in one community that has many backgrounds of status. Besides, people also speak based on the context of situation in social life. Speakers automatically take into account the people who receive the information with the result that they can decide what the language style considered appropriate to use in the conversation whether the receivers are an elderly, children or close friends.

The different language style also happens when people speak by using the same language. This phenomenon is often discovered in Indonesia that has many different regional languages. Indonesian people generally use the national language to converse with people from different regions. Indonesian is the national language to unite a lot of ethnicities that have many different regional languages. However, the different style sometimes happens when two or more different ethnicities speak Indonesian. They unconsciously pronounce the Indonesian words using their regional language style that already becomes a behaviour in their everyday life. Therefore, even the speakers take the same language to converse, the diversity possibly occurs by means of the strong accent and the dialect of their communication.

Nowadays, humans can easily communicate with others not only using oral speech but also through written form. Halliday (1985:30) states that writing is a wording system of the language that is established to tend towards uniformity and provides the codified expression through character, syllabic or alphabetic spelling. There are a lot of writing forms found in our surroundings namely novels, comics, magazines, email, and newspapers. Each of them has a different purpose to spread the notion and information to the audiences. Written language is another way to communicate and inform the idea and feeling through the writing form. As in oral speech, written language also uses the language style whether it is formal or casual which is generally considered according to the context and target audiences of that writing.

The newspaper articles can be one of the options to know the language style used in the text. Newspaper constitutes a popular mass media to spread the latest update to the audience by considering public interests. It means that the article of the newspaper is necessary to pay more attention to the selected issue and language style capable to attract many readerships. The newspaper which fulfills those criteria will increase the desire of the audience to obtain the information over the newspaper. The interesting issues selected involve the phenomenon which

is contemplated having unique and prominent issues. Furthermore, the article is adequate to attract readers by modifying the construction of language configuration. In consequence, the article contains the information with a wording system that will create the language style of the article.

In conducting the study, the writer found two journal articles and a thesis that discussed a similar issue regarding language style. Some scholars who conducted the study are Indra and Hamzah (2018), Resa Ferara Jamil and Nasrum (2018), and Ulil Inayah Mutmainah (2016).

The first study is a journal article written by Indra and Hamzah. They took the study entitled *An Analysis of Language Style of Teenagers Found in Facebook Status*. The method used to analyze this study was the qualitative approach. They concerned the study to discover the type of language style. Besides, they also investigated the frequency style that appears in the status of Facebook. The target users of Facebook account that were chosen refer to the teenagers and pre-adult from Indonesia. Through this study, the writers discovered that there are four styles discovered in their study which consists of formal, consultative, casual, and intimate style. To encourage their study, the writers chose theory according to Joss theory (1998).

The next study is the journal article entitled *Language Style Used in JK. Rowling's Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* by Resa Ferara Jamil and Nasrum (2018). This study used the method of qualitative approach. The writers selected the novel as the data source. They collected some conversations from the novel then investigated the language style by using the theory of Joss (1998). The writers found that there are five language style used in the novel such as frozen style, formal style, consultative style, casual style, and intimate style.

Sociolinguistic is branch of linguistic that discusses about variety of language that refers to the context of language and society. According to Yule (2010:253) sociolinguistic is study of linguistic feature that have the social relation in every people who involved in the context of speech communities. This study explains about interrelation between human and society or community by using the particular variety of language. Besides, variety of language also can happen at one community. For example, at one region will be found many various aspects that consists of background social status, education, age and else. Those create the diversity of the variety of language used from each individual in community. Furthermore, the use of language in every human is different depending on the context of situation.

Furthermore, Genetty (2004:243) states that the interdisciplinary field of sociocultural linguistics has a broad range of the uses and meanings of language in interaction, social, and culture. That means sociolinguistics discusses the approaches to the study of language and society that refers not only to the broad sense but also to the specific set. Many people can speak more than one language as the result they can mention one same thing/product in a different language. The style of communication from different languages generates different language styles as well. Those can be seen employing the grammatical structure of sentences and the pronunciation that of course having diversity among each other. Otherwise, people who speak one language also possibly pronounce words differently which is seen through their accent.

The language variation that occurs among people who speak the same language is divided into dialects. The possibility of the language having more than one dialect is often found in social interaction which is identified through the regional dialects and social dialects. According to Halliday (1985:44), dialects are the variety of language that can be identified when humans speak because they come from a particular region, genre, social class, age group, generation, and another related group in one community. The different geography where humans live affects the different dialects how they communicate. The cultural and habitual factors also take an important

role in the diversity generated by their dialects. Through the way how people speak, it can indirectly identify the background and identity of the speakers.

The accent is a variety of language that has a more specific range than dialect. Genetty (2004:245) argues that dialect is the variety of language that encompasses a complete linguistics system including phonological, grammatical, and lexical characteristics, while an accent is how pronounces the words which are only seen based on the phonological characteristics. From the statement above, we know that accents only focus on how the way people pronounce the words. Every community has their accents to speak even if they speak the same words. It is clear that when we listen to American, British, Australian, and Indian speak English, the different accents will appear from the way they express the language among them.

The language variation is also influenced by the use of register in communication. According to Yule (2010:259), the register is the way of language used conventionally by adjusting the specific context in some situational like in a church, in occupational (e.g among lawyers), or tropical (e.g talking about language). People who are in certain situations speak based on what they are facing. In the church, for instance, the preacher selects the specific vocabulary related to the religious context. Another example is when people write a poem, the language used tends to more beautiful by choosing the appropriate dictions based on the topic of the poem.

Another language variation that still relates to the register is jargon. According to Yule (2010:259), jargon is the special vocabulary used in a certain field or area of occupation or interest. This variety refers to the specific contexts by employing the particular words that are only spoken by insiders of the field. The business area, for instance, has some special vocabularies to communicate among them. Those words that probability becomes part of their communication are the use of the words "synergize" or "empower" that are only used in the business sector. In another area (e.g academic, hotel industry, or architects), they also have jargon that is only understood by insiders.

The language style is an artistic effect of language that can not be separated in communication. People always do the communicate using language style. Language is the way people express ideas and feeling through spoken and writing. In expressing the language, the selection of words, intonation, tone, and tempo are adjusted according to the situation and degree of formality of the communication. Therefore, every expression of language will shape the different language styles following the behavior or the running situation.

According to Auer (2007:12) style is interpreted as the different way of humans to communicate. Humans will communicate differently in a certain situation, whether they are speaking in a formal or informal situation. The style of language applied adjusts with the appropriate context of the situation that is faced. The formal language is often implemented in a serious situation that regularly occurs in government environment or particular institution. The way president speaks in public forum will seem different if it is compared with the ordinary people in a small community such as a group of women who is gossiping. This distinction can be clearly identified through the language style used to express their notion. It occurs as well as in the writing form. When people send emails to their clients, they will prefer the different style using formal language than the email that is delivered to their friends.

According to Paxon (2010:2), communication is the transmission process of information through sound, symbol and also action to the audience. In the process of communication, there are two parties involved to deliver and receive the message and also medium as the device that cannot be separated within it. All kinds of communication require medium to transmit the message. It can be sound, writing, symbol, and else. This occurs in intrapersonal and mass communication in which medium becomes the crucial thing in the process of communication.

Medium of communication that refers to the public is called mass media. Nowadays, mass media becomes part of human life. Anywhere, we will encounter with mass media that its existence even is undeniable. Mass media is the device to inform and also entertain the audience

in the public forum. Baran (2011:6) argues that mass communication is the process in creating the message between mass media and their audience. In this term, mass media spreads the information as a whole to the audience at one time to the current issues obtained in society. The message informed through mass media intends to particular aims based on the targeted audience.

In analyzing the language style of the text, the writer utilizes the theory of Joos (1967). Joos' theory is realized as having appropriateness to answer the question that is formulated in the problem of study. This study concerns to seek language style and the function of language style from three articles of mass media.

According to Joos (1967:156), language style is categorized into five degree of formality that consists of frozen style, formal style, consultative style, casual style, and intimate style. By using the Joos' theory, it is considered capable to complete the problems of the study to seek the language style and the functions of language style of three articles of mass media. The study object is chosen from the article/text from mass media to find out the comparison of different style in displayed content. The distinction of the context of language patterns in articles shapes the articles with the different language styles based on the five degrees of formality.

## **METHODS**

This study applied a qualitative approach as a technique to analyze data sources. Leavy (2014:2) noted that "qualitative research is an expansive and continually evolving methodological field that encompasses a wide range of approaches to research as well as multiple perspectives on the nature of research itself". Furthermore, Leavy (2014:2) explains further that qualitative research is often used to explore and describe the social reality, situation, phenomenon, event, artifact, and build a dept understanding of social life in many aspects. This study applied the qualitative approach because the study described the use of language style found out in the newspaper articles using words or essays. The arrangement of data analysis was by answering the problems of study about language style. Meanwhile, the targeted study focused to compare three different articles of mass media whether the language styles used include among five degrees of formality proposed by Joos' theory. The technique to analyze the data source was by investigating the sentence based on the characteristics and categories to determine the language style from the newspaper article.

The descriptive qualitative approach was a technique to analyze the data sources of the study. Firstly, the writer red the selected article from mass media and analyzed it per sentence by using the characteristics of language style. Secondly, after analyzing the text, the tendency of language style was determined by employing indicators of language style based on Joos' theory. Thirdly, the data finding was grouped to classify the discovery of language style from each article. And lastly, the classified data was explained in more detail in the words or essays. The displayed analysis was mapped separately per text to know the distinction of the language style used. The theory used to analyze this study is the theory of Joos' (1967) with the focus of analysis to classify and compare the language style of the article.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents data findings selected from the data sources in opinion pages of three popular mass media from Indonesia. They are the articles of The Jakarta Post, Antara News,

and Jakarta Globe. The writer investigates the data source using Joos' theory to decide the language style of this study by determining the tendency of language style of three articles mass media. The data finding is presented separately that consists of three different newspaper articles to classify the language style based on five degrees of formality used in every article.

### **1. The Jakarta Post**

The Jakarta Post is the first object of this research. The article is grabbed from opinion pages entitled *Kill the Virus, not Economy* published on June 12, 2020. The main point of the information reveals the impact of Covid-19 on the global financial system and economic stability. Here are the data and analysis found from this article:

#### **Dantum 1**

*The persistent global economic downturn impacted macroeconomic and financial system dynamics in Indonesia throughout last year and early this year.* (The Jakarta Post)

#### **Analysis**

The sentence above uses the language style of formal style. Formal style is the language style used in the formal situation by paying attention to the sentence structure grammatically. The sentence "The persistent global economic downturn impacted macroeconomic and financial system dynamics in Indonesia throughout last year and early this year" is considered as formal style because the sentence structure is dense and rigid. In addition, the sentence is composed grammatically and uses the complex noun phrase that causes the sentence to have the quality of wording system. Therefore, the style of the sentence tends to be categorized as the formal style.

### **2. Antara News**

The second object is selected from the opinion pages of Antara News published on May 28, 2020. The title of this article is *Covid-19: strategy for generating revenue by hospitality operator*. The article reveals about the impact of Covid-19 in the business sector mainly hospitality and an effort of hospitality operators to make new strategies to obtain income from another service. The data finding from the article is undertaken by analyzing the text based on the level of formality in language style.

#### **Dantum 6**

*However, some places such as hospitality, grocery stores, banks, and other vital service facilities remain fully in operation* (Antara News).

#### **Analysis**

The sentence above uses the language style of formal style. Formal style is a language style that concerns the arrangement of sentence structure grammatically because this style is used in the formal situation so that the sentence is also composed by using the formal style. In the sentence "However, some places such as hospitality, grocery stores, banks, and other vital service facilities remain fully in operation", is the form of formal style because of using the sentence structure according to characteristics of formal style. Every word of the sentence is composed grammatically. Therefore, the sentence above is the form of formal style.

### **3. Jakarta Globe**

The last article is chosen from the other newspaper of Jakarta Globe. The article published on May 19, 2020, with entitled *A call for help: Refugee risk catching COVID-19 in an overcrowded shelter*. The main point of the article depicts the experience of the refugees during living in a shelter. They encountered a risk of spreading the virus because of the limited sanitation kits for them and also overpopulated in the shelter. The data and analysis from the article is explained below:

## Dantum 11

*It can't even cover the cost of our food as the price of everything has become more expensive than ever before (Jakarta Globe).*

### Analysis

The sentence above is the language style of casual style. The casual style is used in the informal situation and has the spares structure sentence. In the sentence "It can't even cover the cost of our food as at the price of everything has become more expensive than ever before" is composed by using simple vocabulary. That makes the sentence sounds casual like spoken in a casual situation. Additionally, the use of the contraction "can't" also shows the casual style. In the formal situation, this word will turn into "can not" according to the role of formal language. Therefore, the sentence above is categorized as the casual style.

### DISCUSSION

This is the part to discuss the result of the data analysis using the theory of Joos (1967). According to Joos (1967), language style has several types that are divided into five degrees of formality that are found out in the communication. The classification of language style consists of frozen style, formal style, consultative style, casual style, and intimate style.

According to the data finding and analysis above, There are two language styles discovered in three popular mass media. They are the formal style and casual style. The result of the data analysis above will be discussed by answering the questions of the research problems of the study. Those questions are types of language style and the function of language style.

#### Language Style Used in Three Popular Mass Media

Language style is the way people to communicate in spoken and written. The distinction of the implementation of language style will look clearly from the way the choice of intonation, vocabularies, and how the structure of the sentence is arranged. Language style discovered in the data source of this study also have differences that is known from the writing form on each articles. The table below shows the finding of language style from three popular mass media.

The Discussion about language style on this section only focuses to formal style and casual style. The more explanation is separated into points shown below:

#### a. Formal style

Formal style is the language style used in the formal situation. Formal style can be found out in speech and written communication. The characteristics of the formal style are the choice of the vocabularies that commonly have a long amount of letters (e.g purchase) and the words that sound more polite. Besides, the formal style concerns the structure of the sentence arranged grammatically so that the communication applying the formal style tends to sound more rigid. The example of the formal style is discovered in one of the articles in opinion pages of The Jakarta Post entitled *Kill the Virus, not Economy* published on June 12, 2020, and Antara News entitled *Covid-19: a strategy for generating revenue by hospitality operator* published on May 28, 2020.

#### b. Casual style

Casual style is the language style used in the informal situation that is applied in both speech and written communication. The casual style is oftentimes used in our daily life especially in conversation among close people. Besides, the casual style is also used in written form to converse and inform the idea or information that of course by using the style that is realized having the relaxed language. The indication of casual style can be known through the intonation,

the sparse wording system, vocabularies, and abbreviation of the sentence. An example of casual style is found out in the article of Jakarta Globe entitled *A call for help: Refugee risk catching COVID-19 in an overcrowded shelter* published on May 19, 2020.

## CONCLUSION

Newspaper as the popular mass media in society spreads a current issue with the different language styles inside. The formal style is often found out in newspapers because the published issues of newspapers generally relate to important information from the particular institution such as the issues about a politic, business, and economic. Therefore, this information is posed by using dense and organized language considering the context of the discussion field and targeted audience. However, some newspaper articles inform the issue with the language style of the casual style considered more informal and not rigid.

From the study, three articles on mass media have diverse language styles to deploy information to readers. The first article uses formal style. The second article uses formal style. Lastly, the third article tends to use casual style. The distinction in applying the language styles affects how the displayed information is served for readers. The article with the language style of formal style will generate high-quality language patterns. It occurs due to formal style considerably pays more attention to the density effect of the text. Vice versa, casual style is realized having a sparse wording system so that the article applying casual style contains the information with a language style that flows and easy to be understood.

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