

AN ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE STYLE IN “EXPEND4BLES” MOVIE

Dhiti Zulkarnaen¹

Student of English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Bung Hatta University

Email: dhitzulkarnaen@gmail.com

Temmy Thamrin²

Lecturer of English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Bung Hatta University

Email: temmy.thamrin@bunghatta.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the types of language styles found in the film 'EXPEND4BLES' using Martin Joos's (1976) theory. The main objective is to identify the language styles used by the characters and examine the social factors that influence these style choices, as explained by Holmes (2013). The writer uses qualitative methods to categorize language styles and explore their use in film contexts. The qualitative approach allows for in-depth analysis of dialogue and conversation to identify and explain different language styles. The research findings indicate the presence of four out of five language styles: formal (20 data), consultative (10 data), casual (15 data), and intimate (6 data). The formal style was found to be the most frequently used style. This reflects the film's emphasis on cooperation, decision-making, and emotional negotiation in a high-stakes environment. In addition, the analysis shows that participants (status and role differences between speakers) emerge as the most influential social factor followed by setting, topic, and function. Overall, this study shows that the choice of language style in 'EXPEND4BLES' reflects the social dynamics of the characters and the situational needs they face, confirming the relevance of Joos and Holmes' theory in understanding the function of language in action-oriented narratives.

Keyword: language style, social factor, qualitative

INTRODUCTION

Human beings need to interact with each other to fulfill their needs, and language plays a vital role as the main medium of communication. Through language, people can express their feelings and thoughts, make requests, and share information. Holmes (2013) emphasizes that communication often involves requesting and providing information, which allows individuals to express their desires and emotions. In this way, communication becomes effective when both parties understand one another clearly.

Sociolinguistics is the study of how language is used in society. Wardhaugh (2006) defines sociolinguistics as the study of “who speaks what language to whom, when, and for what,” which highlights that language use varies depending on participants, situations, and purposes. In this sense, the choice of language style is crucial to avoid misunderstanding and to achieve effective communication. According to Gee (2014), language style serves as a means of constructing identities and maintaining social relationships, while Taufik et al. (2023) liken it to choosing clothes for different occasions, where people adapt their style of communication to suit the context.

In movies, language does not only function as a communication tool but also serves as a representation of authority, identity, and power. Foucault (1972) asserts that language is closely related to knowledge and power, as higher-ranking individuals often use authoritative language to assert dominance, while those in lower positions may speak more submissively. Gender also influences communication, with Holmes (2013) noting that men and women tend to adopt different linguistic strategies due to social expectations. Furthermore, Martin Joos categorizes language into five styles: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate, each of which appears in different contexts and can also be found in the dialogue of *Expend4bles*.

This study aims to analyze the use of language styles in the film *Expend4bles* (2023) using a qualitative methodology. By examining selected dialogues and transcripts, the study seeks to uncover how language reflects social roles, identities, and ideologies. As Creswell (2013) notes, qualitative approaches are effective in revealing the meanings behind language choices in specific contexts. Moreover, the film reflects global English usage and cinematic discourse norms, making it a relevant subject for linguistic analysis.

The findings of this research are expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, the study contributes to sociolinguistic research by offering insights into how language styles are used to represent power, identity, and social interaction in popular films. Practically, the research may help students of linguistics, film studies, and communication to better understand the relationship between language, society, and media representation. In a broader sense, it also illustrates how English functions as a global language and a medium of cross-cultural storytelling, as emphasized by Pennycook (2010), with *Expend4bles* serving as an example of linguistic diversity and identity performance in popular culture.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the writer reviews the literature and theories related to the topic of this research in order to provide a clear understanding of the main concepts such as sociolinguistics, language variation, and language style in movies. Sociolinguistics, as explained by Holmes (2013), focuses on how language varies and changes in social contexts by considering factors such as region, class, gender, and situational context. This perspective is crucial in analyzing dialogue within films because language does not only serve as a means of communication but also as a marker of identity, social affiliation, authority, and solidarity. In *Expend4bles*, the way characters shift between formal and casual language illustrates how power relations, camaraderie, and conflict are expressed, while gender differences also contribute to distinct communication styles, with male characters often adopting more direct and assertive speech and female characters leaning toward cooperative and polite forms. Holmes further emphasizes that situational context significantly influences speech, which is evident in action films where characters may employ authoritative and formal commands in high-stakes moments and more relaxed, casual exchanges in informal settings.

This also relates to the concept of language variation, which highlights how individuals adapt their linguistic choices depending on social roles, backgrounds, and contexts, thereby constructing identity and managing relationships. In this sense, the theory of Martin Joos on five language styles is frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate it becomes essential for categorizing the shifts in communication displayed by the main characters in *Expend4bles*. By grounding the analysis in these theoretical perspectives, this study aims to build a strong foundation for identifying patterns

of language use, measuring their sociolinguistic significance, and formulating the hypothesis that the characters' language styles reflect not only personal identity but also broader social dynamics shaped by power, gender, and situational demands.

1. Type of Language Style

The writer uses theory put forward by Martin Joos (1967) which discusses five styles of language: frozen style, formal style, consultative style, casual style, and intimate style. The explanation of these styles is as follows:

Frozen Style: As described by Joos, is the most formal and rigid among the language styles. It is characterized by fixed expressions, ritualistic utterances, and a lack of interaction between speaker and listener. Joos explains that frozen style "is defined by the absence of authoritative intonation in the text" and that it "never relies on it". It is commonly used in written legal texts, religious rites, pledges, and other ceremonial contexts.

Formal Style: As one of the five levels of language, situated just below frozen style in terms of rigidity and ceremony. While frozen style is entirely fixed, formal style still adheres to established structures but allows for planned and audience-aware communication. formal style is marked by detachment and cohesion. Detachment refers to the speaker's or writer's separation from the audience, maintaining objectivity and professionalism. Cohesion, meanwhile, is essential for clarity, as the message must be understood without repetition or clarification.

Consultative Style: According to Martin Joos in *The Five Clocks*, consultative style is characterized as a formal speech style used in semi-formal communication, often between a speaker and listener who may not share intimate familiarity. It is the most neutral and practical form of spoken language, positioned between casual and formal styles. This style is often found in professional or transactional settings such as doctor-patient conversations, teacher-student discussions, or telephone consultations.

Casual Style: As one of the five levels of language formality proposed by Martin Joos in *The Five Clocks*. It is characterized by its use among friends, acquaintances, or insiders, functioning as a relaxed and intimate form of communication. Casual style is primarily used when the speaker assumes that the listener shares enough background knowledge, so minimal explanation or elaboration is needed. This style is rich in elliptical structures (omissions of expected words) and often employs slang, both of which serve to mark the in-group status of the interlocutors.

Intimate Style: According to Martin Joos in *The Five Clocks*, intimate style is the most personal and private level of language, used exclusively among individuals with a very close relationship, such as family members, lovers, or long-time friends. This style assumes complete familiarity between speaker and listener, which results in a type of speech that omits not only grammar but also background information, word clarification, and sometimes even structure. The listener is expected to understand purely through shared experience and tone.

2. Social Factors

In sociolinguistics, social factors are essential in explaining the variations in language use across different contexts and among different speakers. Janet Holmes (2013) outlines that language is not used in a vacuum, it is shaped by and reflective of the social environment in which it is used. These

factors help determine why people say the same thing in different ways depending on who they are talking to, where the conversation takes place, what is being discussed, and why the communication is occurring. Holmes identifies four key social factors influencing language choice:

The participants: “Who is speaking and to whom?”. For example, teacher and student, boss and worker, customer and shopkeeper.

The setting and the social context of interaction: “Where is the interaction taking place?” It can tell that if we in formal situation, we make high formality and if we in informal situation we can make a low formality.

The topic: Explain about “What is being talked about?”. For example, the participant is talking about taxes in a parliament meeting.

The function: Explain about “Why is the interaction happening?”. What is its purpose?. For example, “I am sorry” represent the function of apologizing and “Good to see you” represent the function of greeting.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative method to analyse the language styles used in "EXPEND4BLES" movie. The descriptive qualitative approach is chosen because it allows for detailed analysis of dialogue and conversations to identify and explain different language styles used by the main characters. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research is appropriate for analyzing phenomena in their natural settings and interpreting them in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

The data of this study are taken from the 2023 American action film *Expend4bles*, directed by Scott Waugh and produced by Kevin King Templeton and others. As the fourth installment in the *Expendables* series, the movie tells the story of a team of mercenaries and features nine main characters: Lee Christmas, Barney Ross, Gina, Gunner Jensen, Toll Road, Easy Day, Decha, Suharto Rahmat, and Marsh/Ocelot. The researcher collected the data from the movie's dialogues, obtained through the Skybox Drama Show Movies application. The utterances of the main characters were transcribed, selected, and analyzed to identify language styles relevant to the study.

The data collection process involved several steps. First, the researcher downloaded the movie *Expend4bles* through the Skybox Drama Show Movies application and obtained the script from Scraps from the Loft. To ensure accuracy, the script was carefully compared with the film by repeatedly watching it and paying attention to details such as wording, intonation, emphasis, situational context, and non-verbal cues. The utterances of the main characters were then noted and listed for further analysis. Each line of dialogue was categorized based on Martin Joos's (1976) classification of language styles frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate while the factors influencing these styles were analyzed using Holmes's (2013) theory of social factors.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part presents the findings of the data analysis in which the writer identifies 51 utterances that demonstrate language style in the movie *Expend4bles*. Based on Joos' theory, the utterances are categorized into frozen style, formal style, consultative style, casual style, and intimate style, while the factors influencing the characters' way of speaking are analyzed using Holmes's theory. From the analysis, the writer found four of the five types of language style: 20 utterances of formal style, 10 utterances of consultative style, 15 utterances of casual style, and 6 utterances of intimate style. The most frequently used type is formal style, as the majority of conversations and interactions among the characters are delivered in a formal manner. Meanwhile, no frozen style was found in the data, which can be attributed to the absence of highly ceremonial or rigid contexts in the movie.

FINDINGS

This part presents the findings of the data analysis. The writer demonstrate language style after examining the language styles utterances from the movie "EXPEND4BLES". The writer categorizes the data using Joos' theory into frozen style, formal style, consultative style, casual style, and intimate style and the writer discovers the factors that affect the character's way of speaking based on Holmes's theory.

Type of Language Style

1. Formal Style

Data 1. Minutes 01:16:05

Context: Marsh delivers this speech as villain revealing his motive, explaining the global implications of his plan to provoke World War III through nuclear warfare.

Marsh: I guess you figured out that this device right here is the only thing preventing World War III, a conflict that, while devastating for many, it will be insanely provitable for somebody.

This utterance can be classified as a formal style because its delivery is well-structured, uses complete sentences, and does not display casual language characteristics such as abbreviations or colloquial forms. Formal style is generally used when the speaker wants to provide a clear, neat, and serious explanation of an important matter. In this context, the topic being discussed is also large and serious, so it requires a formal language style so that the speaker's meaning can be conveyed accurately. Thus, based on the sentence structure, communication goals, and the context of the conversation, this utterance represents the characteristics of a formal style.

2. Consultative Style

Data 2. Minutes 00:44:10

Context: Christmas asks whether his way of delivering an instruction differs from Barney's, and Gina responds by comparing the two.

Christmas: **Is my delivery a little different than Barney's?**
Gina: **He probably would have just said, 'Let's go.'**

Christmas: **Yeah. Well... let's go.**

This utterance can be classified as a consultative style because it shows an exchange of ideas in a cooperative manner, where clarification and feedback are sought and given between the speakers. Christmas asks for confirmation or evaluation, while Gina provides a response that guides the conversation forward. The consultative style is characterized by its interactive nature, the use of questions, and the expectation of feedback. It falls between formal and casual styles, as it maintains clear grammar and structure but also allows space for personal input and negotiation of meaning. In this context, Christmas is checking the effectiveness of his communication compared to Barney's, and Gina's answer helps him adjust his response. This interaction reflects the characteristics of consultative style: cooperative dialogue, shared understanding, and mutual adjustment in communication.

3. Casual Style

Data 3. Minutes 00:03:54

Context: This situation occurs during a heated personal argument between Christmas and Gina, where informal and vulgar language is used freely.

Christmas: **I might be complicated, but I ain't fucking hopeless.**
Gina: **Is that what we call it? Complicated? Well, whatever it's called, it's not working, is it?**
Christmas: **Come on, Gina, you're not looking at the big picture.**
Gina: **What's the big picture? Is it you? Are you my big picture? Oh, my God, thank you. You should get the fuck over yourself. 'Because you know what you actually are? A caveman. You do resemble a caveman.**

This utterance can be classified as a casual style because the language is highly informal, emotional, and filled with personal expressions. The speakers use contractions, sarcasm, exaggeration, and profanity, which are hallmarks of casual interaction. Instead of structured or formal communication, the dialogue flows naturally, reflecting the intimacy and conflict of a personal relationship. The casual style here allows both speakers to express raw feelings and frustrations without concern for grammar or politeness, making it authentic and conversational.

4. Intimate Style

Data 4. Minutes 00:05:16

Context: Gina comforts Christmas in a private moment after a stressful mission.

Gina: **You don't always have to carry everything on your shoulders, you know.**
Christmas: **If I don't, who will?**
Gina: **I will. That's what I'm here for.**
Christmas: **I don't deserve you, Gina.**

This utterance can be classified as an intimate style because it reflects personal, emotional communication between two people in a close relationship. The language is soft, reassuring, and emotionally vulnerable, contrasting with the harsh or tactical tones found in other styles. Intimate

style often uses simple words with deep personal meaning, relying less on structure and more on the emotional weight of the message. In this case, Gina's reassurance and Christmas's confession of unworthiness highlight the private, tender nature of their bond, which is not intended for outsiders.

Social Factors

1. Participants

Data 5. Minutes 00:05:16

Context: This conversation takes place between two close friends, where Christmas is feeling emotionally burdened, and Gina offers support.

Gina: You don't always have to carry everything on your shoulders, you know.
Christmas: If I don't, who will?
Gina: I will. That's what I'm here for.
Christmas: I don't deserve you, Gina.

The social factor that influences the use of this intimate and supportive language style is the participant. The participants are close friends, which allows them to share personal feelings and provide emotional support. In Martin Joos' theory, when the participants have a close and trusting relationship, the language style tends to be more personal and affective so that emotions, empathy, and care are conveyed clearly and sincerely.

2. Setting

Data 6. Minutes 01:15:47

Context: The conversation occurs onboard a ship with an active bomb about to detonate. The environment is high-stakes, tense, and dangerous, requiring immediate awareness and clear communication.

Christmas: How long until detonation?
Toll Road: Twelve minutes.
Christmas: All right, we got 12 minutes before this ship blows up like a Roman candle.

The dominant social factor influencing the formal language style here is the setting. The participants are in a critical, high-risk environment where precise information is vital for survival. According to Janet Holmes' theory, when the setting involves imminent danger or a physically high-stakes situation, participants use formal language to convey urgency, clarity, and authority. Here, the setting (onboard a ship with a ticking bomb) shapes the speech to be concise, direct, and unambiguous, ensuring that everyone understands the immediate threat and can respond appropriately.

3. Topic

Data 7. Minutes 01:16:05

Context: This statement is made in a professional or high-stakes context, where the topic involves global conflict and potential consequences on a massive scale.

Marsh: I guess you figured out that this device right here is the only thing preventing World WarIII, a conflict that, while devastating for many, it'll be insanely provitable for somebody.

The social factor that influences the use of this formal language style is the topic. The topic discussed is World War III, a very serious global issue with political and military implications. According to Janet Holmes' theory, the seriousness and significance of the topic affect language choice. When discussing issues that are dangerous, have major consequences, or require credibility, speakers tend to use formal language to convey authority, clarity, and professionalism. In this case, Marsh uses formal phrasing and structured sentences to emphasize the gravity of the situation and ensure the message is taken seriously by the participants.

4. Function

Data 8. Minutes 00:03:54

Context: This conversation occurs between Christmas and Gina in a relaxed, informal setting, where they are joking, teasing, and expressing emotions openly.

Christmas: I might be complicated, but I ain't fucking hopeless.
Gina: Is that what we call it? Complicated? Well, whatever it's called, it's not working, is it?
Christmas: Come on, Gina, you're not looking at the big picture.
Gina: What's the big picture? Is it you? Are you my big picture? Oh, my God, thank you. You should get the fuck over yourself. 'Because you know what you actually are? A caveman. You do resemble a caveman.

The function of this casual language style is primarily affective, expressing personal feelings, emotions, and humor between participants. According to Janet Holmes' theory, casual interactions among peers often serve an affective function, allowing participants to express attitudes, tease, and strengthen social bonds. While there is some referential content (e.g., Christmas describing himself as "complicated"), the primary purpose is affective: Gina's playful teasing, sarcasm, and emotional responses convey closeness, solidarity, and mutual understanding, rather than strictly conveying factual information.

DISCUSSION

In analyzing the language styles used in Expend4bles (2023), this study identified four of the five styles proposed by Martin Joos (1976): formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. Among these, formal style is the most frequently employed, reflecting the film's focus on strategic teamwork, professional conflict, and the need for precise coordination. This finding aligns with Joos' theory that formal style is typically used in situations requiring clarity, cooperation, and mutual understanding, particularly when characters negotiate plans, issue instructions, or communicate critical operational information, as observed in exchanges between Marsh and the team or among team members prior to action sequences. Formal style is evident in mission briefings, command directives, and professional communications, characterized by structured syntax, technical

vocabulary, and a serious tone. For example, when Marsh delivers instructions to the team, his utterances are direct, authoritative, and formal, demonstrating both institutional authority and respect. Consultative style appears when characters engage in interactive problem-solving, decision-making, or peer coordination, as in exchanges between Christmas and Decha or Gunner and Christmas. This style reflects a semi-formal register that balances clarity with cooperative interaction, consistent with Holmes' (2013) view that language style is influenced by participant relationships, roles, and the purpose of communication. Casual style, in contrast, emerges in relaxed, informal contexts such as team bonding or humorous interactions, particularly among Barney, Christmas, and Galan. Features include slang, swearing, jokes, and conversational expressions, highlighting solidarity and affective connection. Intimate style, though less frequent, occurs in emotionally charged and personal moments, primarily between Gina and Christmas, characterized by personal disclosure, affectionate teasing, and emotional vulnerability that illustrate the participants' trust and close personal bonds. Frozen style, however, does not appear because the film lacks solemn or ceremonial contexts that typically require ritualistic or memorized speech.

Furthermore, this study demonstrates that the choice of language style is shaped by the social factors outlined by Holmes (2013), namely participants, setting, topic, and function. Formal style is predominantly used in high-stakes settings where authority, clarity, and precision are required, consultative style is employed in cooperative discussions, and casual or intimate styles are used when emotional expression or familiarity is central to the interaction. In conclusion, language use in *Expend4bles* (2023) reflects both the social dynamics of the characters and the situational demands they encounter. The predominance of formal style underscores the importance of clear, authoritative, and structured communication in high-risk, professional contexts, while consultative, casual, and intimate styles reveal varying levels of solidarity, emotional connection, and interpersonal negotiation. These findings confirm the relevance of Joos' and Holmes' theoretical frameworks in analyzing language choices within action-oriented narratives.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the writer concludes that the movie *Expend4bles* (2023) demonstrates four types of language styles: formal, consultative, casual, and intimate, while frozen style does not appear due to the absence of highly ceremonial or rigid contexts. Among these, formal style is the most frequently used, reflecting the film's emphasis on strategic teamwork, professional conflict, and precise coordination in communication. The use of different language styles shows the dynamic interactions among the characters, where language functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a way to express identity, authority, and solidarity.

Furthermore, the analysis of social factors based on Holmes' theory indicates that participants are the most influential element in determining language style, as the relationships between speakers strongly affect whether utterances are expressed in formal, consultative, casual, or intimate ways. Other factors such as setting, topic, and function also shape communication, though to a lesser extent. Overall, the study highlights that language use in *Expend4bles* reflects the interaction between linguistic choices and social context. In line with these findings, the writer recommends

that future researchers examine language styles in different film genres to provide comparative insights, while students of linguistics and communication studies may use this research as a reference for understanding the relationship between language, society, and media representation.

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