

## **AN ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE STYLES OF CHARACTERS IN AMANDA BROWN'S FILM LEGALLY BLONDE**

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### **Article Information**

Received: Month XX, 20XX  
Revised: Month XX, 20XX  
Accepted: Month XX, 20XX

### **Abstract**

Language styles are a key focus in sociolinguistics, varying based on factors like ethnic background, situation, and goals. This quantitative study analyzes the language styles of characters in Amanda Brown's film *Legally Blonde*. It aims to identify different language styles, characterizations, and contributing factors. Using a qualitative research method, the study examines 157 utterances, revealing that casual style is most prevalent among main characters (28%), followed by consultative (21%), intimate and formal (both 18%), and frozen (15%) styles. The research highlights that setting and participation are critical factors influencing language style. For instance, formal language is used with someone of higher status, while casual or intimate styles are used with close acquaintances.

**Keywords:** Language Styles; Legally Blonde; Main Characters; Supporting Characters

## **Introduction**

According to Delahunty and Garvey, language is a collection of rules we unconsciously hold in our minds (Delahunty & Garvey, 2010). These rules enable humans to express and convey meaning through sounds, visuals, and touchable symbols. Many people use language to communicate in their unique way. How we speak influences how we interact with others in our social lives. Language has a significant impact on humans' ability to understand communication. Several factors influence language style, including setting, scene, participants, and their interactions (Wulandari & Setiawan, 2016). People use different language styles depending on the location, the situation with the person they are speaking with, and the overall context of their conversation. People must communicate using language that is appropriate for the situation. Language is crucial for conveying information from speaker to listener (Firdiani et al., 2022). The text uses a distinct language style and plays an important role. Social interaction is essential for

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understanding one another. Communication is one way to convey our ideas and opinions to others effectively. The speaker can use a variety of styles to make the message more understandable to the hearer (Krauss, 1987).

The term "language style" refers to selecting from various alternatives when using language (Ducrot & Todorov, 1993). Joos defined five types of language styles: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate (Joos, 1967). The Frozen style is popular in formal settings such as palaces, churches, state ceremonies, and other similar events. Formal style is the use of language in critical or severe situations. The consultative communication style is commonly used in semi-formal settings, such as when speaking with someone you don't know well. Casual style refers to speaking in informal or everyday situations, such as when chatting with friends or family outside of formal settings like the classroom. Intimate style refers to a distinct and personal mode of communication reserved for families, romantic partners, and close friends. According to Salzman, people speak differently depending on their background and social dialects, as well as their situation (Salzmann, 1998). This means that how someone speaks depends on the situation and the person they are speaking with.

Language style is an essential component of effective communication (Hidayat, 2015). The way we use language can greatly impact how our message is received by others. It is important to consider our audience and choose our words carefully in order to convey our message clearly and effectively. Additionally, our tone and demeanor can also influence how our message is perceived, so it is crucial to be mindful of these factors when communicating with others. By paying attention to our language style, we can ensure that our message is understood and well-received (Bhatnagar, 2011).

A movie is a type of storytelling that depicts the complexities and experiences of everyday human life (Ochs & Capps, 2009). Movies are an excellent way to learn new concepts, such as positive and negative values. In this case, the researchers chose movies as their research topic because they believe they are an intriguing form of art and literature. Movies are presented using dialogue, gestures, and the creative process of bringing them to life, which aligns with literary concepts (Kappelhoff & Müller, 2011). This means that films, like literary works, are considered a form of literature.

Furthermore, the researcher chose "Legally Blonde" as a film that stands out from the crowd because it can teach viewers numerous valuable lessons. The main characters in those films wanted to convey specific messages. The concept incorporates the values of social culture and education. The lesson on social culture emphasizes the importance of respecting and treating all women equally, regardless of their background or appearance (Barry, 2002).

Legally Blonde is a 2001 American comedy about Elle Woods, a student and sorority girl (Meisuri et al., 2022). In the film, Elle's boyfriend, Warner Huntington III, takes her to an upscale restaurant. She expected a proposal, but he ended their relationship instead. He hopes to attend Harvard Law School and pursue a political career. He believes Elle may need to be severe enough for such a path. She believes that if she can demonstrate her ability to accomplish the same tasks, she will be able to reclaim Warner's trust. After months of studying, Elle earns an impressive 179 on the Law School exam. Her outstanding 4.0 GPA and her score led to her acceptance to Harvard Law School.

Previous studies have discussed the language styles, like the study of the language styles found in *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* movie (Febriani et al., 2019), the language styles found in the *Instant Family* movie (Dewi & Skolastika, 2024), and language style found in movie *Luca* (Larasati & Simatupang, 2022). However, no study has discussed the language styles in *Legally Blonde* movie. Therefore, the researcher was interested to study this issue.

The film 'Legally Blonde' is a unique blend of comedy and romance that offers a window into the life of a modern woman. In today's diverse linguistic landscape, the environment, personal perspectives, and group habits can all shape language style. This study aims to identify the most prevalent language style in the movie. Beyond being a beloved movie from a specific era, 'Legally Blonde' also offers a distinct language style that can enrich our understanding of this area, potentially influencing education (Sinurat & Prihandini, 2024).

The connection between this title and education is the language style, a type of knowledge about the language used in schools. When people become aware of a specific language style, they feel more at ease using it in various settings and with different people. This film also provides viewers with insight into the characteristics of a good teacher. The title of this study, based on the explanations provided earlier, is "An Analysis of Language Style of The Main and Supporting Characters of Legally Blonde Movie."

## Methods

This study examines the subject through a qualitative research design. This study seeks to identify the various language styles used in the film script for Legally Blonde. Qualitative research is a method for understanding social phenomena by examining specific meanings and behaviors. Qualitative research investigates the social aspects of human behavior (Sugiyono, 2014). It aims to interpret people's experiences and improve their understanding of the words they use in everyday situations. According to Creswell, qualitative research is valuable when we have research questions involving variables that we are unfamiliar with and want to investigate (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research is the collection of descriptive data either orally or in writing. It seeks a thorough understanding of a particular subject or background. The study will employ descriptive methods to depict the language style used in the film script for Legally Blonde. The purpose of this study is to describe the phenomenon and the various language styles used in the film. Lodico defines descriptive research as gathering data to test hypotheses or answer research questions (Lodico et al., 2006). This study will employ the descriptive method to describe the language style in the film Legally Blonde.

This study focuses on the main characters in the film Legally Blonde and precisely what they say, including Elle Woods and other characters. The researcher is critical in qualitative research because he or she helps the writer understand the collected data at every stage. This study, therefore, requires a significant investment of time and effort to collect detailed information for analysis. The primary instrument in this study is the researcher, who will spend significant time reading, watching, and comprehending materials related to the theory and concept before collecting and analyzing data.

In this study, the researcher employs two kinds of research tools. The researcher is the main instrument, providing personal interpretation that is crucial to the investigation. In addition, a supporting instrument is used, such as a laptop or computer for viewing the film as media, especially for non-human instruments. The study also utilized a table of instruments to collect data, ensuring a comprehensive approach to the research process.

## Findings and Discussion

The researcher analyzed 157 language-style data from Legally Blonde's primary and supporting characters. To begin the analysis, the researcher attempted to describe the language style of the central and supporting characters in the Legally Blonde movie. Second, the researcher used Holmes's theory to explain the factors that can contribute to different language styles. Finally, the researcher revealed the character and classification of language style. The researcher used Martin Joos' two theories to identify dominant types, characters, and characterization in this study. At the same time, Holmes' theory was used to determine the factors contributing to language style differences.

The findings of this study are divided into three parts based on the research problem. The first discusses the various types of language styles and the dominant types used by the main and supporting characters in Legally Blonde. The second considers the characters and characterizations in Joos's theory. The final section discusses the factors that can contribute to the differences in language styles used by the main and supporting characters in the Legally movie using Holmes's theory.

Based on the data analysis, the researcher discovered 101 language styles. The "casual" style is the most frequently used by the main characters in the film Legally Blonde. The second,

the "consultative" style, is the most common in legally blonde movies. According to the researcher, the "casual" style had the highest number of data, 30 or 28%. The "consultative" style came second, with 24 data points (21%). The third place, "formal" and "intimate" styles, have the same frequencies, according to the researcher's findings of 19 data points (18%). The last position with the lowest percentage is the "frozen" style in 16 data points or 15%.

The researcher discovered 56 data sets containing language styles based on the data analysis. The table below displays data on language styles, including their total number and frequency. The "formal" style is most commonly used by the supporting characters in Legally Blonde. The second, "frozen" style, has the highest frequency in legally blonde movies. The "formal" style had the highest number of data found by the researcher, 16 (29%). The "frozen" style came in second, with 13 data points (24%). The third place, "intimate" style, has the highest frequencies, with the researcher finding 10 data points (18%). Fourth, the "consultative" style has the highest frequency (9 data points, or 18%), followed by the "casual" style (7 data points, 13%).

One hundred one utterances provided language styles in the main characters of the film Legally Blonde. It could be because they have a lot of dialogue to help viewers understand the context. They were Frozen Style (16 utterances) (16%), Formal Style (19 utterances) (18%), Consultative Style (24 utterances) (21%), Casual Style (30 utterances) (28%), and Intimate (19 utterances) (18%). The dominant language style in the movie Legally Blonde is casual. It has a percentage of 28%, with 30 utterances in main characters, because it is primarily uttered in a casual situation where informal sentences are commonly used when speaking to others.

The findings of this study revealed that all language styles were used by both the primary and supporting characters in the film Legally Blonde. According to Holmes' variation language factor, the main character in this film does not match. Among the five styles, casual is the most dominant. This explanation was divided into two parts: the language style used by the main characters and the language style used by the supporting characters in the Legally Blonde film.

The main characters have a small amount of frozen style, with only 16 data points, while supporting characters have only 13 data points. This happens because the interlocutor in that movie was dominant in group discussions, so Elle had to communicate with others in a consultative or casual manner. The setting of place and time influences the frozen style in this film. Elle communicated in frozen style with the other lawyer/suspect in the courtroom.

Formal style is the second type identified in this study. The main character had 19 data points, while the supporting characters had 16 points each. When Elle spoke to older people, such as the lecturer, she used a formal tone. Aside from that, she used a consultative style in a semi-formal topic in a group discussion while studying. It demonstrated that Elle is one of the class's brightest students. Aside from that, it is discovered a consultative style while at the library. It demonstrated that Elle used a consultative style that was appropriate for the factor of language variation.

This study's primary and supporting characters use casual style as the next type. The main characters had 30 data points, while the supporting characters had 7 data points. This happened because the majority of the participants in this film are teenagers, and teenagers need simple language to communicate with each other. Elle used a casual tone in his communication. Holmes relates it to the factor of language variation.

The final category is intimate style, with 19 data points collected from the main characters and ten from the supporting characters in this study. The film Legally Blonde is an educational film. Place, participant, topic, and function primarily concern education and law. As a result, neither the main nor the supporting characters used the intimate style as their dominant style. She used it when she spoke with his close friend.

The researcher discovered 157 utterances in the main and supporting characters of language style based on the data collected. This finding is similar to Deci's research, the most common style is "casual" (Sari, 2015) The difference between this research and Deci's research is the frequency of style. In this study, the "frozen" style has the lowest frequency because the participant and setting influence the main character to use the frozen style more often. Many of

the participants in the *Legally Blonde* film hold high positions. As a result, the principal and supporting characters used the frozen style.

According to the explanation above, there are two critical points about the factors that influence the main and supporting characters. First, the setting is an essential factor in using the language style. In this film, the main character cannot wear casual in court or meetings, as the setting is more formal. As a result, the main character used a frozen or formal style appropriate for the setting. Second, the participant is the most critical factor in utilizing the language style. The speaker will speak formally if the hearer is in a high position. Afterward, if the hearer is someone with whom the speaker has a close relationship, the speaker will use a casual or intimate style.

Based on analyzing this study using Joos's and Holmes's theory, the main and supporting characters of the *Legally Blonde* movie use different language styles because they are influenced by several factors, which are participant, setting, topic, and function.

## Conclusion

Based on the analyzed data, the researcher concludes that the principal and supporting characters use a variety of language styles. The researcher discovered 157 utterances that include language style among the collected data. Each dataset was divided into two parts. That is the result data for the main characters and supporting characters in the movie *Legally Blonde*. According to the analysis, the main characters spend the most time in casual attire, accounting for 28%. The second style is consultative, with a percentage of 21% (24 data points). Third, the highest results were also in intimate and formal styles, which had the same result of 19 data points or 18%, followed by frozen style with 16 data points or 15%.

While formal style accounted for the highest percentage of language style in supporting characters (29%), the types of language style in frozen style are next, with a percentage of 24% or 13 data points. Third, intimate style had the highest percentage (18%) or 10 data points. Then, there was a consultative style with 9 data points (18%). Casual style had the lowest percentage, with 7 data points (13%).

Each scene and character in *Legally Blonde* is intricately characterized, with clear distinctions between the antagonist and protagonist. Understanding these characterizations is crucial in determining the language styles used in their dialogues. It is evident that the characterizations of the actors and actresses significantly influence the language styles used in the film.

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