



Language Style based on Gender Found in the YouTube Gameshow “The Kardashians vs The West family”

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Received: 14 April 2026	Language style is an important aspect of communication used by speakers to express ideas, feelings, and social relationships. This study aims to identify the types of language styles and communication characteristics used by men and women in the YouTube game show. This study uses a qualitative method. Joos's (1967) language style theory is used to analyze five types of language styles: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. Tannen's (1990) gender communication theory is used to analyze communication characteristics, including report talk, rapport talk, directness, and indirectness. The data were taken from the YouTube video of Family Feud entitled “ <i>The Kardashians vs The West Family</i> ” by transcribing all conversations and then separating and classifying the utterances based on gender. The results show that men are more dominant in using report talk and directness to convey information and control interaction, while women are more dominant in using rapport talk and indirectness to build and strengthen interpersonal relationships. However, women also use report talk and directness in competitive situations, while men use indirectness to maintain their self-image and rapport talk to build closeness. In addition, men use casual, consultative, formal, and intimate styles, in which intimate style is also used in their role as the host to create closeness with participants and audiences. Meanwhile, women use casual, consultative, and intimate styles to express feelings and strengthen social relationships. These findings indicate that although men and women use similar language styles, there are differences in their communication purposes based on gender.
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1. Introduction

Language style based on gender is an important topic in sociolinguistic studies, as gender influences how individuals use language in communication (Holmes, 2013). Men and women often demonstrate different communication patterns that reflect social norms, interactional goals, and identity construction (Kasni & Sususco, 2026). Communication functions not only to exchange information but also to express identity, build relationships, and negotiate social roles (Papacharissi, 2018). Therefore, gender becomes a key factor influencing communication strategies and language style in social interaction (Al-Ali, 2019; Maiza, 2021; Pânișoară et al., 2015; Pérez-Sabater, 2021; Pinto, 2008).

In the digital era, gender differences in language style are increasingly visible on online platforms such as YouTube (Rahmani et al., 2024). As one of the most popular platforms, YouTube functions not only as entertainment but also as a space for social interaction and user engagement. This makes YouTube a relevant medium for observing gender-based language styles, especially in game shows, which present spontaneous and dynamic interactions. Through these interactions, participants express their perspectives, attitudes, and identities, allowing differences in lexical choice and sentence structure between men and women to be observed. Therefore, this study analyzes gender-based language styles in the YouTube gameshow *The Kardashians vs The West Family*.

Several previous studies have examined gender and language style in different contexts. Rahmawati and Djuharie (2025) found that men tend to use direct and concise utterances, while women use more expressive forms in WhatsApp conversations. Kasni et al. (2024) reported gender differences in lexical choice and conversational dominance in Balinese communities. Febrianti et al. (2023) found that casual style dominated interactions in Oprah Winfrey's YouTube talk show, while Simamora and Sherina (2022) identified consultative and casual styles in television series. Cantina and Alvarico (2022) also revealed that women used more expressive forms, while men preferred abbreviations in YouTube comments. These studies indicate that gender influences language style across various communication contexts. However, previous studies generally examined language style and gender separately or focused on only one aspect. Research integrating gender and language style in spontaneous spoken interaction within YouTube gameshow contexts remains limited. Therefore, a research gap exists in understanding how gender influences language style in competitive digital entertainment settings, particularly in the YouTube gameshow *The Kardashians vs The West Family*.

This study examines gender-based language styles in the YouTube gameshow *The Kardashians vs The West Family* by identifying gender communication characteristics based on Tannen's (1990) theory and classifying language styles using Joos's (1967) theory. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with verbal data taken from the Family Feud YouTube channel episode uploaded on July 21, 2022. This research is expected to contribute to sociolinguistic studies by providing new insights into gender-based language styles in spontaneous digital interactions.

2. Method

This study employs qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is a type of research used to understand and explore the meaning behind human social behavior (Creswell, 2014). This method is suitable because the research aims to examine how male and female participants employ distinct language characteristics and language styles in spoken digital communication.

The data of this study consist of verbal interactions and utterances produced by men and women in the Family Feud YouTube video *"The Kardashians vs The West Family"* uploaded on July 21, 2022. This video was selected purposively because it provides examples of natural (spontaneous & no script) conversational data involving both men and women speakers in a competitive yet entertaining context.

The data of this study consist of spoken utterances produced by men and women participants in the YouTube gameshow *"The Kardashians vs The West family."* The data collection was conducted through several steps. First, the researcher repeatedly watched the YouTube video to gain a clear understanding of the context and interaction. Second, all verbal utterances spoken by the participants were transcribed. Third, the transcribed data were classified based on the speaker's gender. Finally, the utterances This process is conducted to ensure that all utterances are accurately documented and organized for further analysis.

The data analysis was conducted in two stages. The first stage analyzed the communication characteristics between men and women using Tannen's (1990) theory, which include directness, indirectness, rapport talk, and report talk. This stage aims to identify which communication characteristics are used by men and women and what the differences are between them. The second stage analyzed language style using Joos's (1967) theory, which includes frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate styles. Each utterance was classified based on these categories to determine the language styles used by men and women participants. Through these procedures, this study aims to provide a clear description of how gender influences language use in the context of digital media, and ultimately enables the researcher to conclude how the language styles and communication characteristics of men and women differ based on the findings.

3. Results

3.1 Characteristic Communication between Men and Women

Communication between men and women is characterized by the use of four main communication characteristics, namely directness, indirectness, rapport talk, and report talk. These characteristics are used by both men and women, although their functions and patterns may vary according to the interactional context, communicative purpose, and relationship between the speakers. The following section presents the use of these communication characteristics in the analyzed conversations between men and women participants.

a. Directness in men & women

Data 1 (Directness in men)

Steve Harvey : **You don't like locking the door, Kim?**
Kim Kardashian : No, because I feel bad they sneak in our room in the middle of the night.
Kanye West : **See, that's the problem. I don't need them sneaking in the room.**
[GameShow, 25.05 – 25.12]

This conversation shows directness communication, especially in Steve Harvey's question, *"You don't like locking the door, Kim?"* This is a direct and task-oriented question because Steve asks clearly about Kim's behavior regarding privacy without using indirect language. Kanye West's statement, *"See, that's the problem. I don't need them sneaking in the room,"* also shows direct communication. Kanye expresses his opinion and disagreement clearly and explicitly without softening his statement to protect Kim's feelings. He directly shows his dissatisfaction and asserts his position. According to Tannen (1990), men tend to

express their opinions and disagreement directly to show authority, assertiveness, and control in interaction. Kanye's utterance reflects this characteristic because he communicates his stance clearly, confidently, and without indirectness.

Data 2 (Directness in women)

Steve Harvey : Listen to... They're discussing the answer.

Kim Kardashian : **No cheating over there. No discussing no discussing. No cheating!**
[GameShow, 27.13 – 27.26]

This conversation shows directness communication, especially in Kim Kardashian's utterances, "*No cheating over there. No discussing. No cheating!*" Kim directly and firmly forbids the opposing team from cheating in order to enforce the rules of the game. According to Tannen (1990), women tend to use advice rather than direct commands. However, in this competitive context, Kim uses a direct style to control the opponent's behavior and ensure fairness. This shows that women are able to use authoritative and direct language depending on the situation.

b. Indirectness in Men & Women

Data 1 (Indirectness in men)

Steve Harvey : Jalil?

Jalil : Yes, sir, yes, sir.

Steve Harvey : **Jalil, good this is the only family that ain't ever wore name tags. What do you do, Jalil?**

Jalil : I'm an architect.

Steve Harvey : Architect? ouh okay, good.
[GameShow, 3.23 – 3.32]

The conversation between Steve Harvey and Jalil shows indirectness communication, especially in Steve Harvey's statement, "*This is the only family that ain't ever worn name tags.*" Steve does not express his meaning directly, but instead conveys it implicitly through humor. His statement implies that Jalil are easily recognizable without name tags. This implication is related to his name, Jalil, and his facial appearance are consistent with common Arab names and physical characteristics, making his identity recognizable. However, Steve does not explicitly mention Jalil's Arab background, and instead delivers his meaning indirectly to avoid making a direct reference to Jalil's ethnic identity. According to Tannen (1990), men may use indirectness to avoid making explicit statements, especially in social situations where direct comments could be sensitive or potentially uncomfortable.

Data 2 (Indirectness in women)

Kanye West : Oh, that's an automatic disqualification. I guess we win.

Kendal Jenner : **I think someone's upset that they're losing.**

Kris Jenner : whoo, fuzzy.
[GameShow, 27.13 – 27.26]

Kendal Jenner's speech above shows Indirectness communication "*I think someone's upset that they're losing*" because Kendal indirectly mentions the name or party he is referring to using "*someone's*" and "*they*." This speech is a satire that is conveyed indirectly, so its meaning must be understood through the context of the game. According to Tannen (1990), women

tend to use Indirectness to avoid direct confrontation and maintain interpersonal relationships. Kendal here uses Indirectness to satirize opponents without explicitly stating so that the criticism sounds more subtle.

c. Rapport Talk in Men & Women

Data 1 (Rapport talk in men)

Steve : Well, welcome to Celebrity Family Feud, everybody. I'm your man, Steve Harvey And we got a good one for you tonight. These celebrity families gonna be battling it out for 25,000 bucks for their favorite charity. Well, if y'all ready, let's do it.
[GameShow, 1.02 - 1.06]

The data above shows rapport talk used to create a warm relationship with the audience through the expressions "*I'm your man*" and "*we got a good one for you tonight*." Steve uses rapport talk in a public setting to build a sense of community by calling himself "*your man*." He also tries to reduce the authority distance between the host and the audience in order to create closeness and solidarity.

Data 2 (Rapport Talk in women)

Steve Harvey : My wife's friend. (steven)
Kris Jenner : **Love Marjorie, Love.**
Steve Harvey : that's.
Kris Jenner : **So beautiful.**
[GameShow, 4.29 - 4.34]

The data above shows indirectness communication in Kris Jenner's utterances, such as "Love Marjorie" and "So beautiful." Her goal is to show support and positive feelings. According to Tannen (1990), rapport talk in women is often used to express support and strengthen social bonds through praise and affirmation.

d. Report Talk in Men & Women

Data 1 (Report Talk in men)

Kanye West : I'm here to win, bro!. I'm here to win!.
[GameShow, 8.46 - 8.48]

Kanye's utterance above shows report talk. Kanye says, "*I'm here to win, bro!*" which focuses on a clear statement of attitude and purpose in the competition. According to Tannen (1990), men use language to show confidence (self-display) and maintain independence. Kanye's repetition of the phrase "*I'm here to win*" aims to establish a clear statement of his intention in front of the public, which reinforces his position and status as a strong competitor in the eyes of his opponents and the audience.

Data 2 (Report talk in women)

Steve Harvey : Listen to... They're discussing the answer.
Kim Kardashian : **No cheating over there. No discussing no discussing. No cheating!.** Khloe
Kardashian : Oh.
[GameShow, 27.13 - 27.16]

This conversation above reflects report talk, especially in Kim Kardashian's utterance, *"No cheating over there."* This utterance functions as a direct warning to report a violation of the game rules. Kim clearly conveys information about what is happening and attempts to control the situation. According to Tannen (1990), report talk focuses on conveying factual information and maintaining control. In this context, Kim's speech emphasizes the rules and the situation rather than maintaining interpersonal relationships. Therefore, this utterance is categorized as report talk.

3.2 Language Style In Men and Women

Language use among men and women reflects a range of styles that vary according to the context and purpose of communication. The findings identify four language styles based on Joos's (1967) classification: formal, consultative, casual, and intimate styles. These styles are manifested differently depending on the communication setting, the relationship between speakers, and the purpose of the interaction. The following section presents the use of these language styles by men and women.

a. Formal Style in Men and Women

Data 1

Steve : Well, welcome to Celebrity Family Feud, everybody. I'm your man, Steve Harvey
And we got a good one for you tonight. These celebrity families gonna be battling
it out for 25,000 bucks for their favorite charity. Well, if y'all ready, let's do it.
[GameShow, 1.02 - 1.06]

The data above show formal style. This can be seen from Steve Harvey's role as the host delivering official information to a wide audience at the opening of the television show. His speech functions as a public announcement intended for all viewers rather than a specific individual. According to Joos (1967), formal style is characterized by structured language and is commonly used in public or institutional contexts. In this case, Steve Harvey systematically welcomes the audience, introduces the program, explains the purpose of the game, and announces the prize. Furthermore, the utterance does not require direct feedback from the audience and primarily serves an informative function. Therefore, this speech reflects formal style because its main purpose is to convey official information in a professional setting.

b. Consultative Style in Men & Women

Data 1 (Consultative style in men)

Steve Harvey : All right, Kanye, who else you bring with you? (steve tergesa")
Kanye West : This is my beautiful cousin, Kim Wallace. My cousin, Jalil and that's my cousin,
Ricky, right there.
[GameShow, 2.43 – 2.57]

The data above show consultative style. This is indicated by the exchange of information between Steve Harvey and Kanye West. Steve asks a question to obtain specific information, and Kanye provides a clear and informative response by introducing his family members. According to Joos (1967), consultative style involves two-way interaction and active participation. Therefore, this conversation reflects consultative style because it focuses on exchanging information in a semi-formal setting.

Data 2 (Consultative style in women)

Steve Harvey : Kim, how you doing, darling?
Kim Wallance : Fantastic.
Steve Harvey : Where you from?
Kim Wallance : I recently relocated here from Fort Lauderdale, Florida.
Steve Harvey : Yeah. what did you-what you doing now?
Kim Wallance : I do whatever Kanye asks me to do.
[GameShow, 3.00 – 3.09]

The data above show the use of consultative style because Kim Wallace responds to Steve Harvey's questions with the purpose of providing information clearly and appropriately according to the context of the conversation. When Kim Wallace says "*Fantastic*" and "*I recently relocated here from Fort Lauderdale, Florida,*" she provides relevant and informative answers to the questions asked. The utterances show an exchange of information between the speaker and the interlocutor in a controlled communication situation. According to Joos (1967), consultative style is a language style used in semi-formal two-way communication where the main purpose is the exchange of information.

c. Casual Style in Men & Women

Data 1 (Casual style in men)

Steve Harvey : How you been, man?
Kanye West : I've been good.
[GameShow, 1.51 – 1.52]

The data above show the use of casual style. This is indicated by the use of the word "*man,*" which reflects closeness and familiarity between Steve Harvey and Kanye West. In addition, the simple and informal sentence structure suggests that the conversation does not occur in an official situation. Kanye West's response, "*I've been good,*" is also short and relaxed, without complex formal structures. This conversation does not aim to convey important information but functions as a social greeting to maintain interpersonal relationships.

Data 2 (Casual style in women)

Kris Jenner : They keep me busy, they keep me hopping around here.
[GameShow, 4.25 – 4.28]

The data above show the use of casual style because Kris Jenner uses an informal idiomatic expression, namely "*hopping around here.*" Joos (1967) states that casual style is characterized by the use of free and non-technical vocabulary. Kris uses this metaphor to describe her busy life in a humorous way. This style shows that the interaction is informal and without social distance, which commonly occurs in conversations between individuals who already know each other in a social environment.

d. Intimate Style in Men & Women

Data 1 (Intimate style in men)

Steve Harvey : What's up, Kimmy? Hey, darling, How you doing?
[GameShow, 2.04 - 2.06]

The data above indicate the use of intimate style, especially in Steve's speech using the nickname "*Kimmy*" and the term of endearment "*darling*." The use of these endearment terms suggests that formal social boundaries have been completely eliminated. In addition, the questions "*What's up?*" and "*How you doing?*" in intimate style often no longer require long or informative answers, but only serve as affirmations of a close relationship that has been established for a long time. In the male context, the use of intimate style in a public space like this shows Steve's attempt to create a very warm and familial atmosphere, where he positions himself not as a stranger or a rigid host, but as a figure who has a deep personal connection with his interlocutor.

Data 2 (Intimate style in women)

Steve Harvey	: My wife's friend. (steven)
Kris Jenner	: Love Marjorie, Love.
Steve Harvey	: that's.
Kris Jenner	: So beautiful.
	[GameShow, 4.29 – 4.34]

The data above show the use of intimate style because Kris Jenner uses the word "*love*" in the utterance "*Love Marjorie, love.*" This word indicates emotional closeness between Kris Jenner and Steve Harvey's wife. In addition, the utterance expresses affection and personal feeling. According to Joos (1967), intimate style is used to show close personal relationships and emotional connection between speakers.

4. Discussion

Men and Women use the communication characteristics of directness, indirectness, rapport talk, and report talk, however their use shows different tendencies and purposes depending on the interaction context (Kasni & Budiarta, 2025). Directness in men is seen when they express their opinions, disagreements, and positions clearly and firmly. This indicates that language is used to assert attitudes and show control in interaction. Meanwhile, women also use directness, especially in competitive contexts, such as when enforcing the rules of the game. This finding shows that directness is not only used by men, but can also be used by women when the situation requires assertiveness.

In addition, indirectness is also used by both men and women, but with different functions. In men, indirectness is used through humor or indirect implications to convey meaning without stating it explicitly, especially in situations that may be sensitive. This shows that indirectness can function as a strategy to maintain social comfort. Meanwhile, women use indirectness to deliver criticism or satire subtly without creating direct confrontation. This use indicates that indirectness functions to maintain interpersonal relationships and avoid open conflict.

In terms of rapport talk, both men and women use it to create positive social relationships. Men use rapport talk to build closeness with the audience and create a more relaxed atmosphere, even while in a public role as the host. Meanwhile, women use rapport talk to show support, praise, and positive feelings toward the interlocutor. This indicates that rapport talk functions as a means to build and strengthen social relationships. Furthermore, report talk was found to be more dominant in men, as it is used to state goals, show confidence, and assert their position in the competition. This shows that language is used as a tool to convey information and demonstrate a competitive attitude. Meanwhile, in the women's data, the use

of report talk was not found to be dominant, and women tended to use language more to show emotional support rather than to convey factual information or assert competitive positions directly (cf. Purba et al., 2023).

Besides communication characteristics, this study also found that men and women use several of the same types of language style based on Joos (1967), namely formal style, consultative style, casual style, and intimate style. Formal style is used to deliver official information to the audience in a public context. Consultative style is used by both men and women in two-way conversations to exchange information clearly. Casual style is used by both to create a relaxed atmosphere and show familiarity (Debora, 2013). In addition, intimate style is used to show personal closeness through the use of special address terms or emotional expressions. Men and women do not use only one type of communication style, but use various communication characteristics and language styles depending on the interaction context (Cameron, 2007). However, there is a tendency for men to use language more often to assert position, goals, and information, while women tend to use language more often to show emotional support and build interpersonal relationships. These findings indicate that the differences in language use between men and women are not absolute, but are influenced by the situation, social roles, and communication purposes in interaction (see Al-Hamzi et al., 2024; Alzubi et al., 2024; Huy & Thu, 2023; Kristy, 2022; Lee & Chin, 2021; Messerli, 2017).

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that men and women use the same communication characteristics directness, indirectness, rapport talk, and report talk. as well as the same language styles, namely formal, consultative, casual, and intimate styles. However, the difference lies in their communicative purposes. Men tend to use language to express positions, convey information, and emphasize competition, while women tend to use language to express support, show emotional closeness, and maintain interpersonal relationships. This finding shows that gender differences are not reflected in the types of language used, but in the goals and functions of language use within interaction.

The researcher hopes that this research can provide benefits for readers in understanding language styles based on gender and the characteristics of communication used by men and women in conversation, Understanding the language style is very important in daily life, because it can help individuals use language appropriately according to social contexts, interpersonal relationships, and communication goals, both to convey information and build social relationships appropriately.

In addition, the researcher also hopes that this research can be a reference for future researchers who are interested in studying language styles and differences in communication styles based on gender. In addition, the researcher hopes that this research can be a reference for future researchers who are interested in studying similar topics. In this study, researchers did not find frozen style, because the context of gameshow tends to use spontaneous, interactive, and non-fixed or ceremonial language. Therefore, the researchers suggest that further research use different objects, such as formal speeches, formal interviews, or other institutional contexts, so that all types of language styles can be found more completely.

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Conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest in this study.

Authors' contribution

Ni Putu Diva Soka Maharani: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing-original draft, Writing-review & editing. **Ni Wayan Kasni:** Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology. **I Wayan Ana:** Supervision, Methodology, Validation, Writing-review & editing.

Statement of the use of AI

The author declares that, during the preparation of this manuscript, AI tools were used to assist with checking grammar and sentence clarity. However, all AI-generated suggestions were carefully verified and edited by the author.

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