

Language Styles Used in *Secondate's Instagram Captions* from 1 July to 27 December 2021

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out the language styles used by *Secondate* in the *Instagram* account captions. The writers did this study to find the language styles based on word choice in the *Instagram* account captions for the product *Milky Gel Lip Tint*. The writers used the theory of *gaya bahasa berdasarkan pilihan kata* or language styles based on word choice by Keraf (2006), which utilizes three indicators, namely sentence length, structure, and vocabulary. The writers also referred to the theory of syntax by Chaer (2007) and the theory of standard Indonesian by Prihantini (2015). The research was done using a qualitative approach. It was found that *Secondate* had many informal and conversational language styles and rarely used the formal language style in their *Instagram* captions.

Keywords: language styles; Instagram; caption

INTRODUCTION

This study discusses the language styles based on word choice used by the *Secondate Instagram* account in the captions of the *Milky Gel Lip Tint* products. The writers chose to observe the local cosmetic brand named *Secondate* for this study because *Milky Gel Lip Tint*, the brand's initial product, sold 10,000 pieces less than ten minutes after its release (Sahertian, 2021). *Secondate* uses *Instagram* as a marketing and communication tool with its target audience (*Instagram* users who visit and follow the account).

METHOD

The writers used a qualitative approach in conducting this study. The data were taken from the Indonesian *Secondate Instagram* captions' sentences related to the *Milky Gel Lip Tint* products, which were published from 1 July 2021 to 27 December 2021. The writers gave numbers for each Indonesian sentence of the captions using two-digit formal that reflected the order of the occurrences and the order of each sentence in the caption. The data was analyzed using Keraf's (2006) theory of *gaya bahasa berdasarkan pilihan kata* (language style based on word choice), Chaer's (2007) theory of syntax, and Prihantini's (2015) theory of standard Indonesian.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the language style based on word choice used by *Secondate Instagram* captions for the *Milky Gel Lip Tint* product from 1 July 2021 to 27 December 2021. The following language styles were used by *Secondate Instagram* account for the *Milky Gel Lip Tint* captions: conversational language style, informal language style, and formal language style. Each of the language style is further discussed in the sections below.

A. Conversational Language Style

As the name implies, conversational language is a style frequently used for daily conversations, joking, conveying humor, and expressing features. This style is comparable to sports attire in that it is still a complete outfit but is worn for informal and rather casual occasions (Keraf, 2006).

Three indicators can distinguish the conversational language style (Keraf, 2006). The first indicator is the length of the sentence. Keraf (2006) states that the conversational language style typically comprises short sentences that avoid identical words or adverbs, but it can also be very long due to several sentences written continuously without final stops. The sentence's structure is the next indicator. According to Keraf (2006), syntactic structure plays a minor part in forming this style and is frequently overlooked. The final indicator is the choice of vocabulary. This style is likely to contain non-standard words that come from conversational words and popular words that come from foreign languages.

Some sentences used in the captions of the *Secondate Instagram* account are classified as conversational language style. The following are some examples:

- *Sample: Data 36.2*

"MGLT shade apa nih yang paling SLLLuRrRrPp-able?" (Which MGLT shade is the most SLLLuRrRrPp-able?)

This sentence was used as the caption for a *Milky Gel Lip Tint* product photograph in one of its variations named *Netlfix*. The sentence in data 36.2 was intended to inspire the *Instagram* users who visit the *Secondate's Instagram* account to share their perspectives and experiences in the comment section.

In data 36.2, the sentence shows the use of conversational language. The use of short and fragmented sentences is the first indicator. The sentence is short because it avoids words with identical meanings and repetitions, and it is fragmented because there is no main verb that complements the subject. An unfragmented sentence may be formed if an alternative verb '*menarik*' (attractive) is used after the adverb '*paling*' (most)

Additionally, the sentence structure reflects the conversational language style. Because the sentence lacks a predicate function, the syntactic function in data 36.2 is insufficient. It may be a complete syntactic sentence if an action verb such as '*menarik*' (attractive) is added after the adverb '*paling*' (most).

Furthermore, the last indicator is the choice of vocabulary. The sentence in data 36.2 mostly uses non-standard Indonesian incompatible with *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI). It is indicated by the abbreviation 'MGLT' for the product's name, *Milky Gel Lip Tint*; the use of a popular word derived from the English language 'shade' refers to the product's color gradation. Next, the sentence employs the non-standard Indonesian word '*nihh*' (this), which is incompatible with KBBI, and the word '*SLLLuRrRrPp-able*' is a self-created word that is not from standard Indonesian.

In analyzing the sentence in data 36.2, the writers found that the most apparent indicator of conversational language style was the use of non-standard words. The non-standard Indonesian words '*nihh*' (this) and '*SLLLuRrRrPp-able*' (slurpable) used in the sentence are the clearest indications of the use of conversational language style.

- *Sample: Data 21.4*

"Bicara tentang menghidrasi?" (Talk about hydrating?)

The context of the caption was that the *Secondate's Instagram* account published an *Instagram* post about the *Milky Gel Lip Tint* product's ingredients. The sentence was part of the captions

that described the substances that contribute to the product's moisturizing ingredients. The sentence was intended to inform the *Instagram* users who visit *Secondate's Instagram* account that the product contains various components that cannot be found in other lip tints, making it the queen of lip tints.

Data 21.4 shows the use of a conversational language style in a sentence. The first indicator is that the sentence is short and fragmented. The sentence is short because there are no identical or repetitive words and adverbs. The sentence is fragmented because no subject performs the action verb.

The sentence structure also reflects the conversational language style. The sentence's structure is incomplete because it neglects the subject and predicate from the syntactic function. The sentence contains only the object '*bicara tentang menghidrasi*' (talk about hydrating). It may become a complete syntactic sentence if there is a subject preceding the sentence, e.g., '*mari kita*' (let us), and if the word '*bicara*' (speak) is prefixed with the prefix *ber-* into '*berbicara*' (discuss), turning the noun into an action verb that acts as a predicate.

The final indicator is the choice of vocabulary. This sentence employs non-standard Indonesian words. The word '*bicara*' is not prefixed with the standard Indonesian suffix *ber-* (talk). Next, using the standard Indonesian prefix *meng-* in the word '*menghidrasi*' (hydrating) violates KBBI.

In analyzing the language style of data 21.4, the writers noticed that the length of the sentence became the most stringent indicator. As the sentence is short and fragmented due to the absence of a subject, it is apparent that data 21.4 was written in a conversational style.

B. Informal Language Style

Keraf (2006) states that informal language style has a less exquisite overall impact than formal. Keraf (2006) analogs the informal language style to business attire, which is acceptable and conventional but inappropriate for formal occasions. Keraf (2006) states that the informal language style can come in various ways, ranging from the most sophisticated version (which combines and is nearly similar to the formal language style) to an informal language style that has almost merged with the conversation language style.

The differences between informal and formal language styles are subtle, but the informal language style can be distinct on three indicators (Keraf, 2006). The first indicator is the sentence's length. According to Keraf (2006), the informal language style focuses on word efficiency and avoids using identical or repetitive words, resulting in short sentences. The second indicator is the sentence's structure. Keraf (2006) states that the sentence in informal language style performs the complete syntax function with the minimum function of subject and predicate. Lastly, the choice of vocabulary can indicate the use of informal language style. The vocabulary used in this sentence is derived from standard Indonesian words compatible with KBBI (Keraf, 2006).

There are several sentences used in the captions of the *Secondate Instagram* account that are classified as informal language style. The following are some examples:

- *Sample: Data 29.1*

"*Ini dia hari paling cerah dalam bulan ini karena kita punya sesuatu untuk kalian!*" (It is the brightest day of the month because we have something for you!)

In this case, the context of the caption was that *Secondate's Instagram* account informed the *Instagram* user who visited *Secondate's Instagram* account about the upcoming promotion program. This sentence was part of the *Milky Gel Lip Tint* caption created to convince the *Instagram* user to visit the official website's shop and check for any current promotions.

The sentence in data 29.1 exemplifies the informal language style of writing. The sentence is short because it contains no identical adverbs or repetitive and redundant words, which conforms to the informal language style indicator.

The other indication of the use of informal language style in data 29.1 is that the sentence has the complete syntax function. The sentence has the subject '*kita*' (we), the predicate '*punya*' (have), and the object '*sesuatu*' (something).

Lastly, the vocabulary selection reflects the informal language style. The sentence in data 29.1 is composed of words that adhere to the KBBI as standard Indonesian language.

The writers found that the syntactic structure of data 29.1 as the most obvious indicator of informal language style. Keraf (2006) asserts that the syntax of informal language is complete, as indicated by the subject-predicate-object function in data 29.1.

- *Sample: Data 25.2*

"*Sekarang saatnya kamu menguji intuisimu bersama kami*" (Now is the time for you to test your intuition with us)

The context of the sentence was that the *Secondate* account posted a video of someone spreading one of the *Milky Gel Lip Tint* versions in her hand. *Secondate* added a black and white effect to the video, obscuring the color. The sentence was used to persuade the *Instagram* users who visit *Secondate's Instagram* account to predict the color swatched on the video and evaluate their ability to do so without seeing the product's actual color.

The sentence in data 25.2 demonstrates the use of informal language style. The sentence in data 25.2 is a short sentence. There are no identical adverbs in the sentence and no repetitive and redundant words.

Following that, informal language style is evident in the sentence structure. The sentence has the complete syntax function with the subject '*kamu*' (you), the predicate '*menguji*' (test), and the object '*intuisimu*' (your intuition).

Lastly, informal language style is evident in the vocabulary selection. The sentence in data 25.2 is entirely composed of standard Indonesian words, as defined by the KBBI. There is also the standard Indonesian prefix *me-* in the word '*menguji*' (test) and the suffix *-nya* in the word '*saatnya*' (it is time).

The writers found that the syntactic structure of data 25.2 as the most noticeable indicator of the use of the informal language style. As Keraf (2006) states, the syntax of informal language is complete, indicated by the subject-predicate-object function, which can be found in the data 25.2.

C. Formal Language Style

Three indicators can also identify the formal language style (Keraf, 2006). First, it is visible in the length of the sentence, in which the sentence tends to be long and inverted. The long sentence is accomplished by using adverbs with similar or identical meanings and the repetition of words. Keraf(2006) also asserts that the formal style's sentence is typically inverted. This inversion can occur when the subject-predicate (SP) relationship is inverted to the predicate-subject (PS) relationship (Chaer, 2007). The complicated and sophisticated syntax functions are the next indication of formal language style. According to Keraf (2006), the syntax function can be more than a single subject and predicate in this language style. At last, formal language style can be indicated by vocabulary selection that is consistent with the standard Indonesian language. Following that, Prihantini (2015) affirms that this standard Indonesian language can be distinguished through the words that adhere to *KBBI* and are written according to *Ejaan Yang Disempurnakan (EYD)*.

D. Formal Language Style

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Given that the formal language style is typically reserved for important and formal occasions, the formal language sentences are hardly found in the captions of the *Secondate Instagram* account.

- *Sample: Data 26.3*

"vitamin E - membawa sel-sel baru, meredakan bibir pecah-pecah dan kering." (vitamin E - brings new cells, relieves chapped and dry lips.)

In this case, the context of the caption was that the *Secondate* account posted the *Milky Gel Lip Tint*, and the sentence was used to describe the product's components. This sentence informed the *Instagram* users who visit *Secondate's Instagram* account about the benefits of a particular ingredient in *Milky Gel Lip Tint*. *Secondate* wanted to inform the customer about the product's nutritional benefits for their lips.

The sentence in Data 26.3 demonstrates the use of formal language. First, the sentence length indicates the formal language style. The sentence is long because of repetitive words: 'sel-sel' (cells) and 'pecah-pecah' (chapped).

The sentence's structure is another indicator that the sentence is written in a formal language style. The sentence's syntax structure is complicated. The sentence has a subject of 'vitamin E' (vitamin E), predicates of 'membawa' (bring) and 'meredakan' (relieve), objects of 'sel-sel baru'

(new cells), and adverbs of '*bibir pecah-pecah dan kering*' (chapped and dry lips).

Lastly, the formal language style is apparent in the vocabulary selection. The sentence's vocabulary is entirely compatible with KBBI as standard Indonesian. There is a prefix *mem-* in both '*membawa*'(bring) and '*meredakan*' (relieve). Also, the words '*sel-sel*' (cells) and '*pecah-pecah*' (chapped) indicate the standard Indonesian language and are written according to EYD.

The length of the sentence was the most obvious indicator of the use of the formal language style in data 26.3. It is shown by the use of repetitive and identical-meaning words.

CONCLUSION

Secondate's Instagram account used all language styles based on word choice from 1 July 2021 to 27December 2021. However, the conversational and informal language style usage appeared to be more frequent than the formal language style. The writers suggested further research include more *Instagram* accounts to determine the similarities and differences of language styles used. In addition, it would be interesting to learn more about language style on other social media platforms such as *TikTok* and *YouTube*.

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